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Executive Summary

The Iowa's Living Roadways Program was borne of an effort to provide design services to rural Iowa communities. The program is a collaboration involving the Iowa Department of Transportation (Iowa DOT), the Living Roadway Trust Fund (LRTF), Iowa State University (ISU), and Trees Forever.

Iowa's Living Roadways consists of the Community Visioning Program and the Projects Program. The Community Visioning Program provides planning and landscape design assistance to Iowa's small communities. The Projects Program funds the planting of native grasses, wildflowers, shrubs and trees along transportation corridors.

Both Visioning and Project Programs provide assistance to Iowa communities with populations of fewer than 10,000, because these smaller communities often lack the resources and expertise needed to design and implement landscape enhancements.

The 2011 visioning communities are Brighton, Elk Horn, Kimballton, Lisbon, Madrid, McGregor, Monroe, Monticello, Mount Vernon, Prairie City, Rockwell City, and Sidney. The sustainability and success of the program is evident by the number of actual communities it had touched. Since Iowa's Living Roadways was created in 1996, 182 communities have participated in the Visioning Program and 445 communities have received grants from the Projects Program.



Communities



Brighton

Trees Forever Facilitator: Patty Petersen

Landscape Architect: Al Bohling

Interns: Ryan Anderson, Michael Buh

Brighton is located in the rolling hills of southeast Iowa just south of the Skunk River and three miles east of Lake Darling State Park on Iowa Highways 1 and 78. Residents value their connection to the nearby state park and neighboring communities. The town is known as the gateway to Lake Darling State Park, and after park renovations, should be poised once again to benefit economically. Brighton Access, just north of town on the Skunk River Water Trail is also an important part of the Brighton community. It is a popular state-owned area for tubing, boating and fishing. A particularly beautiful site upstream along the river is Brighton's Timber, said to be the largest stand of timber in Washington County and beyond.

Residents of Brighton value the downtown district. Citizens enjoy walking along Washington Street and experiencing the scenic farmland surrounding Brighton, the remarkable brick architecture downtown, and the residential neighborhood area that is shaded by numerous mature shade trees. Walkers appreciate the views to the west and south of town. Many citizens value the picturesque vistas of well-maintained farmland outside of town.

Looking toward the future, the Brighton visioning committee hopes that some community dreams will be fulfilled. Some of

the higher priorities include a trail between Brighton and the Lake Darling (alignments are already being studied by a Washington County trails group), grocery store and restaurant, and attractive highways through town. The design team's main suggestions include:

- **Pedestrian Infrastructure:** Utilize existing sidewalks within the city of Brighton to create a safe pedestrian connection to the downtown district from the residential areas; repair where necessary; and connect discontinuous sidewalks where possible given cost, convenience and the availability of land.
- **Downtown Enhancements:** Connect the traditional downtown and the highway corridor one block north by installing new street lighting, planting street trees and repairing the existing sidewalks.
- **Gateway Signage:** Update older signs; make improvements to the stone sign.
- **Lake Darling Connection:** Visually connect Lake Darling to the downtown community by adding Ding Darling artwork in the park and on building exteriors; physically connect the community to the lake with a trail and trailhead.





Steering Committee:

Linda Burger

Jamie Collier

Tonia Crossett

Rob Farley

Esther Hillyer

Nola Kleemeyer

Dorothy Miller

Rosemary Pacha

Ed Raber

Jason Rebling

Cathy Rich

Jason Roberts

Shirley Schooley

Fay Vittetoe



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1. A trailhead parking lot and informational kiosks would make a Brighton-Lake Darling Trail convenient for an even wider user base.
2. The city park could be visually linked to Lake Darling with wildlife sculptures influenced by the work of Ding Darling, the namesake of the nearby Lake Darling. A new park path and pedestrian lighting would make the art more accessible.
3. Lake Darling is only three miles from Brighton, but there is no safe way for residents to walk or bike to the park. The design team recommended creating a trail in the Highway 78 right-of-way.
4. The current entryway signage to Brighton is outdated.
5. Refurbishing rather than replacing the signage would save on the cost of installation.
6. The stark white sides of the Brighton EMS building would be a good place for a mural.
7. The design team proposed a mural depicting iconic illustrations from Ding Darling.
8. This section shows the proposed streetscape for Washington Street, including street trees, period lighting with banners and improved walkways.



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Elk Horn

Trees Forever Facilitator: Barb Grabner-Kerns

Landscape Architect: Josh Shields

Interns: Youngjae Ahn, Danny Pritchard, Steven Seefeld

Elk Horn was established by Danish immigrants who were brought in by the expanding railroad system in the early 1900s. Due to their relative isolation from other towns, the people held onto their Danish traditions. Today, Elk Horn is a popular Iowa tourist attraction because of features such as the Danish Windmill and the Danish Immigrant Museum. The town maintains a connection with its rich history by introducing the use of alternative energy sources that originated in Denmark. Elk Horn currently have the largest concentration of electric vehicle charging stations in the United States.

Elk Horn participated in the visioning process along with Kimballton, another Danish community in the area. Highway 173 runs north-south through both towns, and County Road F58 runs east-west through Elk Horn. The design team created a set of proposals that would improve both communities.

The economies of Elk Horn and Kimballton are tourist-driven. As such these communities need elements to attract visitors, such as aesthetically pleasing entryways, way-finding signs for historic places and tourist sites, and

well built sidewalks. Residents believe that if more of these types of improvements are made, they will have more visitors in the area.

With these potential changes in mind design team developed the following proposals:

- Danish Villages Gateway: Develop grand entrance to “Danish Villages”; reinforce “Danish Villages” theme and logo developed in collaboration with ISU College of Design PLaCE (Partnering Landscape and Community Enhancement) program; establish graphic identity for entire corridor and each community; use local materials and low-maintenance native plantings in gateway feature construction.
- Highway Corridor Landscaping: Develop corridor plantings to reinforce “Danish Villages” signage; establish regular intervals of signage along corridor; provide seasonal interest and variety along corridors; use low-maintenance native species in corridor planting.
- Elk Horn Community Signage: Develop community signage while reinforcing “Danish Villages” theme; establish a strong sense of arrival at all community entrances; enhance surrounding landscape; use low-maintenance native species in planting designs.





Steering Committee:

Annette Anderson

Susan Greving

Janell Hansen

Paul Hansen

Stan Jens

John L. Jensen

Terri Johnson

Glennnda Mortensen

Robert Mortensen

Mark Paulsen

Lisa Riggs

Jerry Schrader

Scott Smith



- **Kiosk/Way-finding Signage:** Develop a way-finding system directing visitors to attractions in both communities; follow Iowa DOT guidelines for way-finding signage along Highway 173; install informational kiosks near Danish Windmill and Northern Atlantic Caboose.
- **Downtown, Parking and Intersection Improvements:** Clearly define pedestrian crossing on major roadways; reduce overall street width where

possible; develop key intersections to accommodate pedestrians and encourage visitors to explore; improve sidewalks to conform to ADA guidelines; use a Danish paver pattern in sidewalks and retaining wall; integrate amenities that encourage use of the streetscape—benches, litter receptacles, bike racks, decorative fencing, and LED street and pedestrian lighting; consider parking regulations to promote safer vehicle access in diagonal parking.



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1. The design team proposed building an informational kiosk at Caboose Park. This addition would direct visitors to landmarks in the park as well as inform them about the area.
2. Signs in the Highway 173 right-of-way would need to be large enough to be easily understood by drivers traveling at highway speed. These banner-style signs both introduce the corridor and market the separate identities of Elk Horn and Kimballton.
3. The proposed signage creates a gateway to the Danish villages at the I-80 interchange on Highway 173. Coordinated signage would continue north through Elk Horn and Kimballton.



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4. Entry signs for Elk Horn on east-west F58 should be in the same style as Elk Horn signage on Highway 173. This design reference the Danish Windmill.
5. The existing Main Street in Elk Horn is not particularly pedestrian friendly.
6. This image edit shows Main Street in Elk Horn with the addition of pedestrian-scale street lighting and a Danish paving pattern to better define the sidewalks..
7. The intersection of Highway 173 and Elm Street is often used by pedestrians, making it a priority for safety improvements such as crosswalks.



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Kimballton

Trees Forever Facilitator: Barb Grabner-Kerns

Landscape Architect: Josh Shields

Interns: Youngjae Ahn, Danny Pritchard, Steven Seefeld

Kimballton is a small Danish community of approximately 350 people located in Audubon County, Iowa. The community was established in the late 1800s and named after a railroad official, Edward Kimball. Kimballton has a Danish heritage with which area residents strongly identify.

Kimballton participated in the visioning process along with Elk Horn, another Danish community in the area. Highway 173 runs north-south through both towns, and Highway 44 runs east-west through Kimballton. The design team created a set of proposals that would improve both communities.

The economies of Elk Horn and Kimballton are tourist-driven. As such these communities need elements to attract visitors, such as aesthetically pleasing entryways, way-finding signs for historic places and tourist sites, and well built sidewalks. Residents believe that if more of these types of improvements are made, they will have more visitors in the area.

With these potential changes in mind the following proposals were developed by the design team:

- Danish Villages Gateway: Develop grand entrance to “Danish Villages”; reinforce “Danish Villages” theme and

logo developed in collaboration with ISU College of Design PLaCE (Partnering Landscape and Community Enhancement) program; establish graphic identity for entire corridor and each community; use local materials and low-maintenance native plantings in gateway feature construction.

- Highway Corridor Landscaping: Develop corridor plantings to reinforce “Danish Villages” signage; establish regular intervals of signage along corridor; enhance surrounding landscape; provide seasonal interest and variety along corridors; use low-maintenance native species in corridor planting.
- Kimballton Community Signage: Develop community signage while reinforcing “Danish Villages” theme; establish a strong sense of arrival at all community entrances; use low-maintenance native species in planting designs.
- Scenic Overlook: Build an overlook to showcase views of Kimballton and the Western Skies Scenic Byway; reinforce the presence of the Little Mermaid Trail; reinforce “Danish Village”-themed signage and attractions.





Steering Committee:

Annette Anderson

Susan Greving

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John L Jensen

Terri Johnson

Glennnda Mortensen

Robert Mortensen

Mark Paulsen

Lisa Riggs

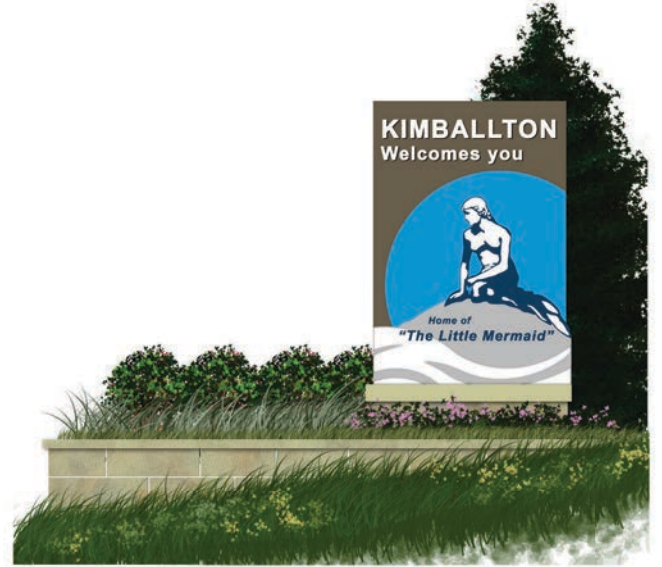
Jerry Schrader

Scott Smith

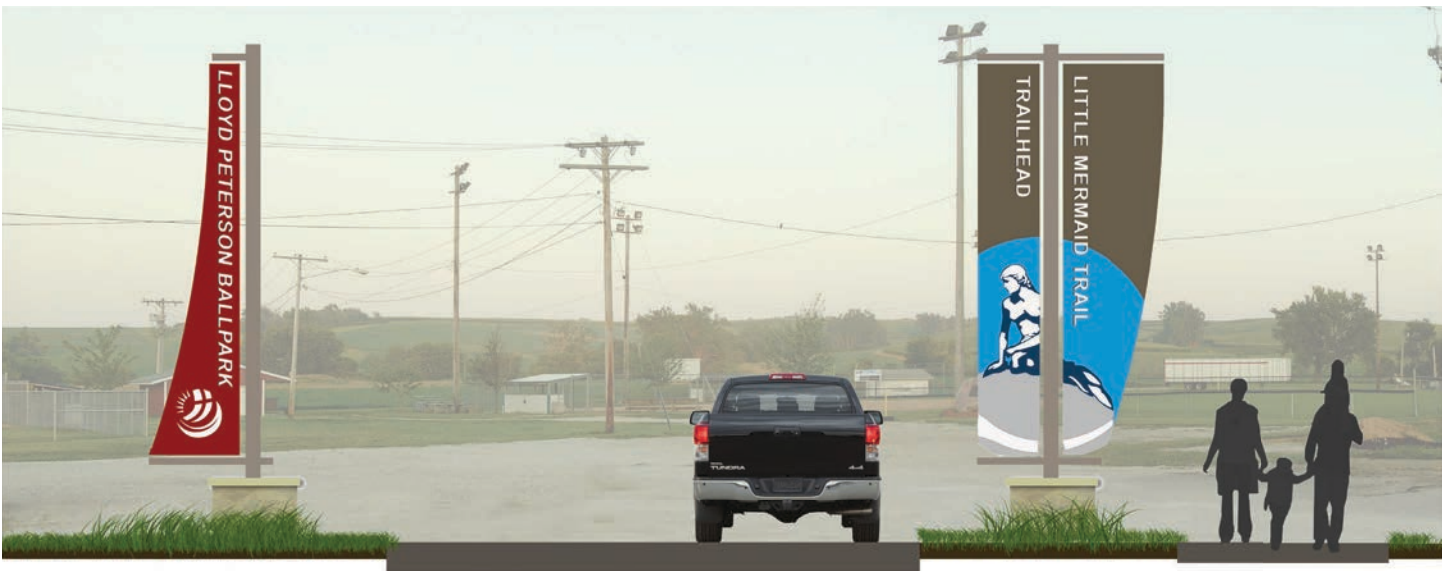
- **Kiosk/Way-finding Signage:** Develop way-finding system that can direct visitors to attractions in both communities; follow Iowa DOT guidelines for way-finding signage along Highway 173; install informational kiosks near the Little Mermaid Sculpture and Dania Park.
- **Downtown, Parking and Intersection Improvements:** Clearly define pedestrian crossing on major roadways; reduce overall street width where

possible; develop key intersections to accommodate pedestrians and encourage visitors to explore; improve sidewalks to conform to ADA guidelines; use a Danish paver pattern in sidewalks and retaining wall; integrate amenities that encourage use of the streetscape—benches, litter receptacles, bike racks, decorative fencing, and LED street and pedestrian lighting; consider parking regulations to promote safer vehicle access in diagonal parking.

1. Kimballton community signage could feature a mermaid, a reference to the Little Mermaid sculpture.
2. The proposed Little Mermaid Trail next to Highway 173 would connect Elk Horn and Kimballton, becoming a major feature of the corridor.
3. The contours of the landscape would create a scenic overlook of Kimballton from the Little Mermaid Trail.



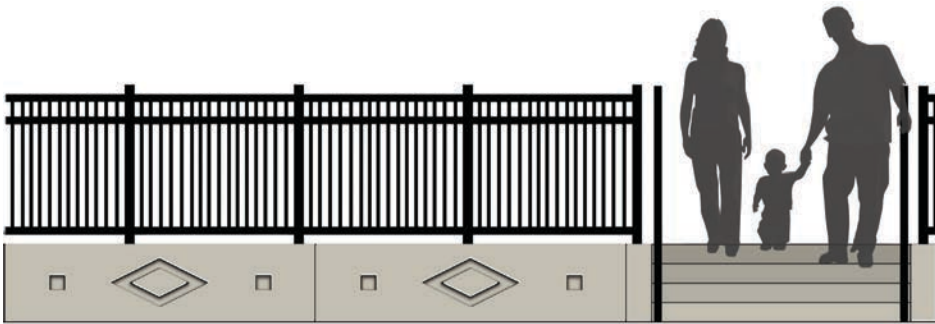
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4. *The design team recommended a fence along the top of the retaining wall, as well as decorative paving on the sidewalks and the walls to more clearly delineate pedestrian traffic from vehicular traffic.*
5. *This image shows Main Street in Kimballton with the proposed changes to the sidewalk, as well as new streetlights with banners and other amenities.*
6. *Bump-outs at intersections would improve the appearance of downtown while serving as traffic calming devices.*

Lisbon

Trees Forever Facilitator: Emily Swihart

Landscape Architects: Loren Hoffman, Andrea Blaha

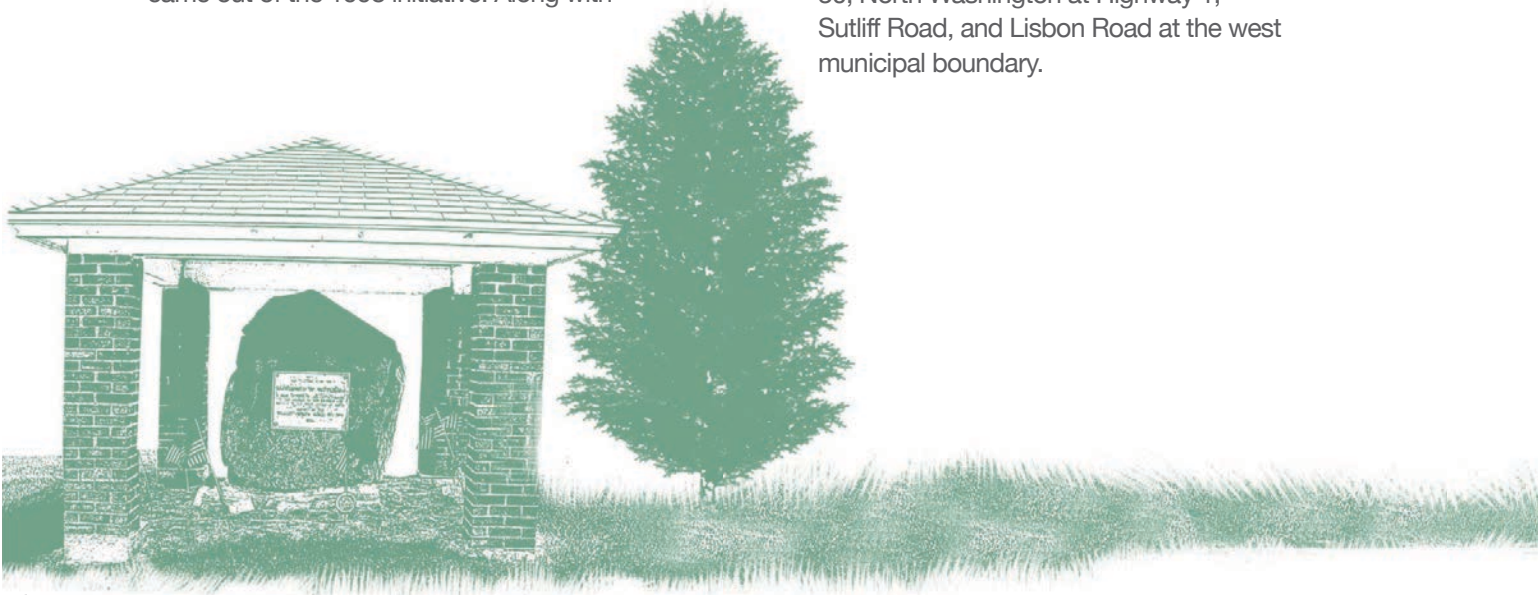
Interns: Nick Gullick, Robin Hamadani

Lisbon, a community of 2,152 in Linn County, shares many amenities with the adjacent town of Mount Vernon while maintaining its own strong local identity. A full calendar of annual events—including a Halloween celebration, a Memorial Day parade, a 10-mile race, Sauerkraut Days, the Lincoln Highway Buy-Way Yard Sale, the firemen’s dance and the library’s “Slice of Pie” readings—helps to cement community ties. The town’s history is showcased in the many historic homes and commercial buildings that line the old Lincoln Highway corridor. Residents are excited about new economic and development opportunities, but also expressed concern that unplanned growth could damage Lisbon’s “small-town feel.”

Highway 30 passes through Lisbon, but the Iowa DOT is considering building a bypass around the town. A bypass would reduce congestion, but visioning workshop participants would prefer a Highway 30 Business concept that incorporates turning lanes and traffic calming features. Lisbon previously participated in the Community Visioning Program in 1998. This year, the steering committee was interested in expanding the Main Street streetscape that came out of the 1998 initiative. Along with

streetscape improvements, residents want new entry and way-finding signage. The design team developed following proposals:

- **Signage:** Develop a family of themed way-finding signage; install entry signage that reflects Lisbon’s special identity; choose plantings around entry sign to enhance and frame views of sign; plant native prairie forbs and grasses in roadway ditch.
- **Gettysburg Boulder Memorial Concept Plan:** Build larger, more accessible pavilion for boulder south of cemetery entrance; highlight new pavilion with plantings; add benches and kiosk with map.
- **West Main Street Improvement Concepts:** Refurbish fencing and landscaping at ravine west of Jefferson Street; shift trail away from edge of Lisbon Road to create a buffer between motorists and pedestrians; incorporate paving design, site furniture or signage that draw attention to the Historic Lincoln Highway; narrow travel lanes on West Main Street to calm traffic and add a bike lane.
- **Secondary Entrance Enhancements:** Install plantings at East Main at Highway 30, North Washington at Highway 1, Sutliff Road, and Lisbon Road at the west municipal boundary.





Steering Committee:

John Bardsley

Iris Cook

Sarah Gorman

Bob Hill

Joe Jennison

Cole Norton

Beryl O'Connor

Chris Yancey



- Highway 30 Road Improvements: Create pedestrian crossings, including colored crosswalks; install raised, landscaped medians near Gillette Lane intersection; place street trees and plantings near the road to calm traffic; illuminate the corridor with additional street lighting.
- Lisbon Comprehensive Trails Plan: Identify routes that could serve as trail links; identify sidewalk and street improvements needed for pedestrian access along those routes; place street trees to accommodate future infrastructure improvements; work with adjacent towns and counties to connect trails throughout region.
- Potential Highway 30 Bypass: Formally adopt a regional comprehensive trails plan; work with the Iowa DOT to make pedestrian access a priority; widen bridges and rights-of-way to include pedestrian lanes or sidewalks; create connection to Sutliff and, eventually, Hoover Trail network.



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1. *A new fence and selective brush clearing would turn this overgrown ravine into a scenic overlook.*
2. *This sign design is inspired by architectural details from downtown Lisbon. Its column is topped with a cabbage, a nod to Sauerkraut Days.*
3. *Incorporating lighting into the entryway landscaping would ensure visibility and offer a distinctive look at night.*
4. *A new pavilion and improved landscaping would showcase this boulder from the battlefield at Gettysburg.*



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5. *The current trail west of Lisbon is immediately adjacent to the roadway, which is a safety issue.*
6. *One option for improving the trail would be adding a curb and gutter with a storm sewer system, filling in the ditch, and making a wide shoulder to separate pedestrians from the roadway.*
7. *The Highway 30 corridor could also be made more pedestrian-friendly with the addition of a raised median and crosswalks.*



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Madrid

Trees Forever Facilitator: Barb Grabner-Kerns
Landscape Architects: Brett Douglas, Grant Thompson
Interns: Sifei Liu, Nate Schlorholtz

Madrid lies just west of the Des Moines River, where veins of coal and shale run through the farmland. Initially established in 1846 by Swedish immigrants as Swede Point, the town was renamed Madrid in 1883. Although the region is primarily agricultural, the mining and railroad industries have shaped its history.

Coal mining began near Madrid around the 1880s, but the industry took off during the early years of the 20th century. From the mines, coal was transported to nearby spurs of the Chicago and Milwaukee Railroad. Eventually, the Scandia Mine bought mineral rights to the area and became the area's largest employer.

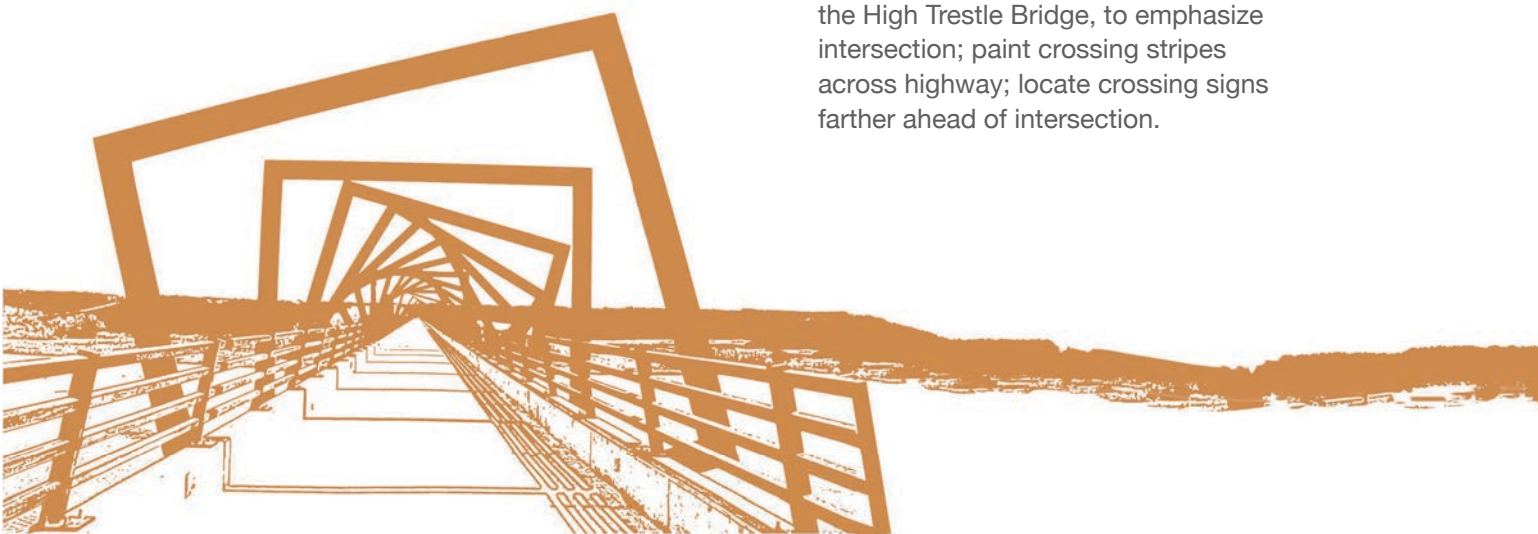
The mining industry brought many Croatian and Italian immigrants, as well as people of Irish and German descent. Many settled in mining camps outside of town. When some of the mining camps were closed, small homes were moved in from nearby areas to form a new neighborhood within city limits; that neighborhood is still known as Boxtown, after the box-like shape of the houses.

Madrid is rich in natural and historical amenities and has become a regional recreational destination. The High Trestle Trail was recently completed along the old railroad right-of-way,

and its High Trestle Bridge is considered by many to be the crown jewel in the Central Iowa Trail network. The trail has already proven popular with both residents and visitors. The town sees the trail as an opportunity to market its businesses as well and works to communicate their presence to the trail users.

Access points, trailheads, and other amenities have been installed or planned along the High Trestle Trail, but its crossing of Highway 17 remains a major safety concern. The visioning committee would also like to build and repair sidewalks along Highway 17, which runs north-south through Madrid. Finally, the committee said it would like to develop "Welcome to Madrid" signs to promote the community identity. The design team proposed the following proposals:

- **Pedestrian Connections:** Install sidewalks along Southern Prairie Drive and South Main Street; create a trail on the east side of Highway 17 from Meadow Estates to East Eighth Street; pursue easements or land purchases as necessary to expand trail to 8 or 10 feet wide.
- **Safety Improvements at Intersection of Highway 17 and High Trestle Trail:** Build steel cribbings, echoing those on the High Trestle Bridge, to emphasize intersection; paint crossing stripes across highway; locate crossing signs farther ahead of intersection.





Steering Committee:

Terri Dooley

Brian Horn

Kathy Kalmoe

Todd Kilzer

Keith Kudej

Don Lincoln

John Pierce

Carol Wilcox



- **Entry Signage:** Install entry signage at both sides of town along Highway 17; consider signage themes to emphasize either natural or mining history.
- **Multipurpose Trail Connections and Enhancements:** Screen industrial properties with overstory trees along High Trestle Trail; keep vegetation five feet back from trail edges to maintain safe viewing distances; build trail connection between High Trestle Trail and Jensen Park; improve way-finding signage at Third Street trail access.
- **Downtown Alley:** Pave alley between State Street and Water Street, partly or entirely with permeable paving; use paved alley for market tents or vendor booths during community events.





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1. *This sign design incorporates the High Trestle Trail into Madrid's identity.*
2. *A backdrop of tallgrass and poplar birch would create an eye-catching contrast with the metal in High Trestle Trail-themed sign.*
3. *This sign design references both the High Trestle Trail and Madrid's coal mining legacy.*
4. *Evergreens would provide a year-round backdrop to this sign option. The sign's white lettering to read against the dark sign and vegetation.*
5. *Steel cribbings, echoing those on the High Trestle Bridge, and painted stripes would ensure that drivers on Highway 17 were aware of the trail crossing.*
6. *A four-foot-wide strip of permeable pavement in the alley between State and Water Streets would manage runoff at a lower cost than using all permeable pavement.*
7. *Connecting the High Trestle Trail to Jensen Park near the South Street bridge would bring trail users into downtown Madrid.*
8. *The proposed trail along Highway 17 would require an eight-foot-wide trail lined with trees would be ideal, but the city would need to get easements to expand the current right-of-way.*
9. *A new sidewalk or trail along Southern Prairie Drive would create a connection to Edgewood Park.*

McGregor

Trees Forever Facilitator: Mark Pingnot

Landscape Architects: Craig Ritland, Samantha Abkes

Intern: Samuel Carlson

Located in the Upper Mississippi River Valley, McGregor enjoys proximity to the shore, scenic views of the surrounding hills, and abundant wildlife, all of which make it a popular tourist destination. In the 1860s, the pearl button industry, commercial fishing and hunting, and fur trading created steamboat and railroad traffic to and from McGregor.

From Main Street, the view of the Mississippi River is framed by historical downtown buildings and high wooded bluffs. A three-block section of the historical downtown buildings are included on the National Register of Historic Places. Many are the original homes of influential community icons or storefronts and gathering spaces from the town's past.

High on a bluff overlooking the river is McGregor Heights, a Wildlife Refuge School originally established by the Decorah District of the Methodist Church for use as a camp meeting place. On the side of this and other bluffs in and around town are caves reaching back into the sandstone strata. Although their town has historically important sites, residents acknowledge their town shares its community with Marquette,

Prairie du Chien and several popular nearby attractions. Residents explained that the big challenge for the future lies in continuing to connect regional communities and attractions with recreational trails. Particularly important is the Trail of Two Cities between Marquette and McGregor. Trails will be a difficult project given the lack of space and environmental policies.

The following proposals were developed by the design team to aid McGregor update its community while remembering its history:

- **The Trail of Two Cities:** create a connection from Riverfront Park to the beginning of the catwalk (an elevated recreational trail on piers located at the waters edge) that includes a shared access road trail near the Boatels; pave the access road and add parking.
- **Riverfront Park Improvements:** Expand green lawn space, replace existing lights and the shelter.





Steering Committee:

Dave Breitbach

Maria Brummel

Joe Collins

Gay Hallberg

Rogeta Halvorson

Carl Hexon

Andrea McElwaine

Fred Petrie

Beth Regan

Lynette Sandler



- **Riverfront Docks:** Renovate or replace the docks and rearrange them to give more view of the river.
- **Downtown Parking:** integrate parking into the downtown fabric in a more attractive way using repetitious trees, lights, and lawn area behind curbs; install stamped colored brick trim and railings between curb cuts along Highway 76.
- **Signage Updates:** Utilize the grain elevator as a welcome sign into the community by turning it into a lighted beacon along the river; develop a logo to be used on community signage.
- **Cannon Park Improvements:** Create a veterans memorial in the park by installing a labyrinth that recognizes in chronological order the wars and conflicts of which veterans have been a part.



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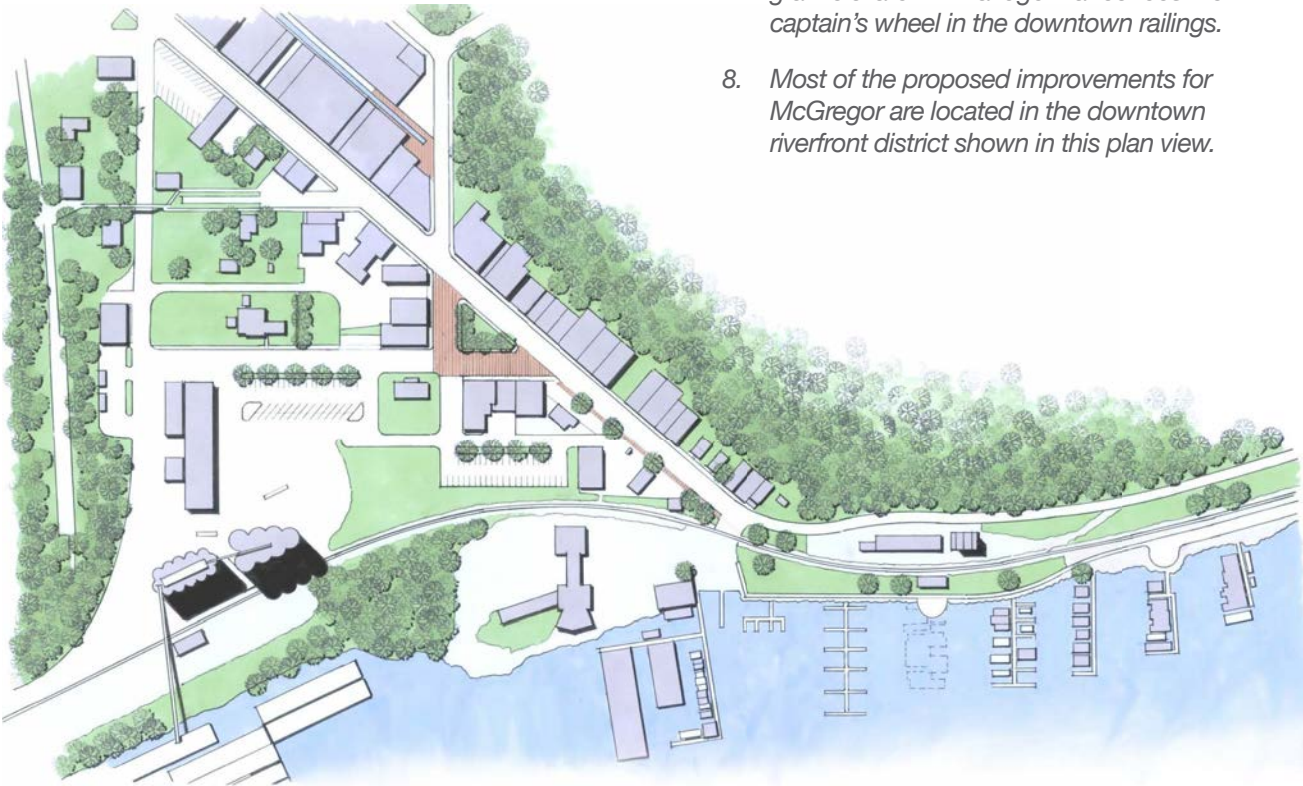
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1. *A labyrinth surrounding the McGregor family obelisk would serve as a veterans memorial in Cannon Park.*
2. *This image edit of the concrete runnel that serves as a storm water channel shows the potential of the area for pedestrian use.*
3. *Renovating or replacing the private docks adjacent to Riverfront Park would significantly improve its appearance. The city leases space for the docks, and the design team encouraged it to require improvements.*
4. *Relocating the boat dock currently in front of the picnic shelter in Riverfront Park would make room for a new public fishing pier.*
5. *Streetscape enhancements suggested to soften the community entrance corridor include street trees, lawn areas where possible, and sidewalks and pedestrian amenities.*
6. *McGregor's grain elevator is an iconic landmark, but it is in need of renovation.*
7. *The design team recommended painting the grain elevator with a logo that echoes the captain's wheel in the downtown railings.*
8. *Most of the proposed improvements for McGregor are located in the downtown riverfront district shown in this plan view.*

Monroe

Trees Forever Facilitator: Karen Brook
Landscape Architects: Brett Douglas, Dylan Jones
Interns: Sifei Liu, Nate Schlorholtz

During the westward expansion of the United States, a small group of pioneers staked out land in what is now Jasper County, Iowa. "Tool's Point," the small settlement that resulted, quickly sprouted into a full-fledged community and was incorporated as a town in 1867. After being incorporated Tool's Point became known as Monroe. Presently, Monroe is a growing community located 30 miles southeast of Des Moines. The town is home to roughly 1,800 people, many historical buildings, a variety of local businesses, a golf course and a strong school system. The community is known for its friendliness, Midwestern values and small-town charm.

Monroe is primarily a bedroom community. Because of the amount of commuting to and from town, residents have expressed a strong desire for a more beautified entrance to the community. They are also interested in providing upkeep of the many public spaces in the town and expanding park trails as well as pedestrian bridges.

The following proposals were developed by the design team to aid Monroe in this process:

- **Entryway Signage:** Install concrete and aluminum entry signage on Highway 14 north of town; install primary way-finding signs at five entrances to town (east, south, west, northwest and north); install secondary way-finding signs at three additional locations; use Monroe "crossroads" logo on both entry signage and on caps to way-finding signs.
- **Downtown District Streets (Mill Street and the town square):** Resurface and restripe angled parking stalls; add period-style street and pedestrian-scale lighting.
- **Downtown District Parks:** Relocate horseshoe pits from public square to Tool's Point Park; add plantings at four corners of the square; improve pedestrian crossings entering square; add a sidewalk around perimeter of square.
- **Pedestrian Connections:** Add sidewalk to existing Highway 14 bridge over Highway 163; add sidewalks along Highway 14 south of town and along Old Iowa 163; create trailhead for planned trail connecting Monroe to Prairie City.





Steering Committee:

Jane Berry

James Breckenridge

Sandy Breckenridge

Judy Brodersen

Tom Davis

Lynn Donahue

Patty Duinink

Dave Pendroy

Chery Schmidt

Drew Schmidt

Kim Thomas

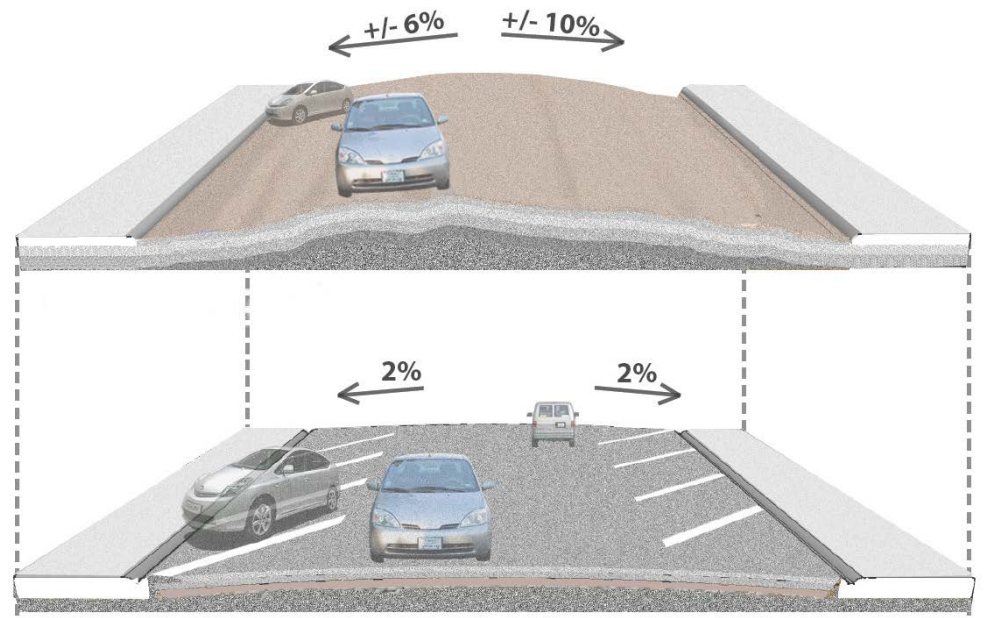
Tami Thomas

Lehrl Van Dalen

Kathy Van Veen

Jody Wood





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1. *The slope of downtown streets currently makes parking and walking difficult (top). Milling and resurfacing streets would alleviate this problem without the cost of a full reconstruction (bottom).*
2. *The design team proposed a crossroads-themed logo for Monroe's entrance sign.*
3. *The sign's size and bold white text would make it easily visible to passing motorists.*
4. *Monroe's vibrant town square could be enhanced with period-style lighting, sidewalks around its perimeter and plantings at the corners.*
5. *The design team developed a family of signage that incorporates the crossroads theme.*
6. *The mid-block crossing into the public square on Highway 14 is dangerous because of high-speed traffic. A painted crosswalk and solar-powered flashing LED signs as shown in the image edit would make it safer.*
7. *Old Highway 163 is a popular route for walkers, but it lacks sidewalks and connectivity.*
8. *A proposed recreation trail along Old Highway 163 that connects with other pedestrian walkways in town would make the route more desirable and safer.*



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Monticello

Trees Forever Facilitator: Patty Petersen

Landscape Architect: Al Bohling

Interns: Ryan Anderson, Michael Buh

Monticello is a town of 3,796 between Cedar Rapids and Dubuque on US Highway 151. The town is located along the Maquoketa River, where rolling hills, limestone outcroppings and farms make up the landscape that inspired Grant Wood. Its natural beauty and the Great Jones County Fair draw nearly 100,000 visitors every year. The town was not built on tourism, however. Monticello happened to be the “end of the line” when railroad expansion was halted during the Civil War, and that luck of geography propelled its development. Today, the community is a regional hub for industry, agriculture and finance.

Monticello previously participated in the Community Visioning Program in 2002. That process resulted in streetscape improvements along Iowa Highway 38 entering town. Residents said that they would like to see that concept developed further throughout their community.

This time, the steering committee’s main goal was to establish a trail system to connect the southeast and northeast corners of the community, generally following Highway 151 and Kitty Creek. Residents also said they wanted to improve the community entrances, protect the First Street streetscape, and make sure any trail included riverfront access.

In response to these concerns, the visioning design team developed the following proposals:

- **Trail System:** Use signage and edging to designate existing downtown routes as part of a trail system; pave shoulders along county roads to create a trail system for pedestrians and cyclists; choose routes to make both long and short loops; use FEMA buyout space to create trailhead north of East Oak Street.
- **US Highway 151 Beautification:** Plant right-of-way and interchanges with trees and shrubs to beautify corridor; define an aesthetic identity and act as a living snow fence.
- **Gateway Signage:** Install signs next to Kirkwood Community College and Monticello High School; accent signs with plants adapted to each intersection; illuminate signs at night.
- **South Cedar Fountain and Plaza:** Raise fountain plaza to street level; construct larger parking lot with permeable paving; install infiltration beds to handle greater runoff; relocate existing plants and playground equipment; construct Blue Star memorial marker next to fountain.
- **Roadway Improvements:** Install roundabouts on Main Street at intersections with East Oak Street and First Street; fill roundabouts with low-lying plantings; add turning lane for westbound traffic on Iowa Highway 38 near high school.





Steering Committee:

Leslie Althoff

Roxanne Anderson

Kerri Boffeli

Kimberly Brooks

Becky Cooper

Larry Gullet

Marilyn Hanna

Doug Herman

Russell Hodge

Teri Keleher

John Maehl

Tina McDonough

Ron Newland

Richard Scheiter

Reed Stockman



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1. *A new trail system could showcase some of the beautiful views around Monticello, including the Maquoketa River, Kitty Creek, and the forests and farmland that surround them.*
2. *Proposed landscaping for the east entrance includes maple, crab apple, burning bush and boxwood.*
3. *The FEMA buyout area by East Oak Street could be used to create a trailhead park. A bioswale could be constructed at the east end of the park to filter water before it reaches Kitty Creek.*
4. *Raising the level of Monticello's fountain and surrounding it with a new plaza would increase its prominence.*
5. *The existing Highway 151 on-ramp is devoid of vegetation.*
6. *The design team proposed planting different species of trees outside the right-of-way and prairie vegetation in the right-of-way to add interest.*
7. *In the winter, the prairie grass and trees will act as a living snow fence, reducing the amount of drifting snow on the roadway.*

Mount Vernon

Trees Forever Facilitator: Emily Swihart

Landscape Architects: Loren Hoffman, Andrea Blaha

Interns: Nick Gulick, Robin Hamadani

Mount Vernon's historical background and architectural influence play a significant role in the town's character. An iconic photo often used to describe Mount Vernon depicts the Ash Park Historic Neighborhood, which is a row of nicely maintained Victorian homes on a street lined with large shade trees. Each home features a matching Victorian porch, many of which are flying an American flag. With the historic Lincoln Highway running through the heart of Mount Vernon, the town stands as part of the country's first transcontinental highway. A more local connection exists in the old interurban rail service that still connects Lisbon to Cedar Rapids today.

Three official historic districts establish Mount Vernon's community: the Uptown Historic District, Cornell College and the Ash Park Historic Neighborhood. The Uptown Historic District on First Street has preserved many of the original storefront details and remains as the town's business district. The entire Cornell College campus is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Community members agree that it is not only the architectural influence but also the abundance of large street trees and beautiful private gardens that define Mount Vernon.

Although the community does not have a complete infrastructure of sidewalks and trails, community members cherish the walkability of

their town. Whether a walker enjoys the rugged natural trails around the lake at the Nature Park, the well-maintained historic architecture of the Ash Park Neighborhood, or the picturesque countryside along the old Lincoln Highway, Mount Vernon residents appreciate the steady improvements they have seen on the community's sidewalk conditions, but hope to see a fully connected town in the future.

The visioning committee focused upon improving trail connectivity and safety, creating a unified transportation system and developing an integrated signage plan as they evaluated different aspects of the community. The following proposals were developed by the design team to address these issues:

- **Comprehensive Trails Plan:** Amend and update the "Mount Vernon Parks and Schools Safe Connection Routes Plan" by identifying more strategically planned crossings and identifying areas to improve pedestrian access upon certain streets and routes.
- **Highway 30 Underpass near Nature Park:** Convert the drainage culvert under the highway to a pedestrian access to the south side of Highway 30; create a clearance that will allow bike traffic.





Steering Committee:

Carol Chamberlain

Lori Cranston

Marty Christensen

Darrin Gage

Joe Jennison

Richard Peterson

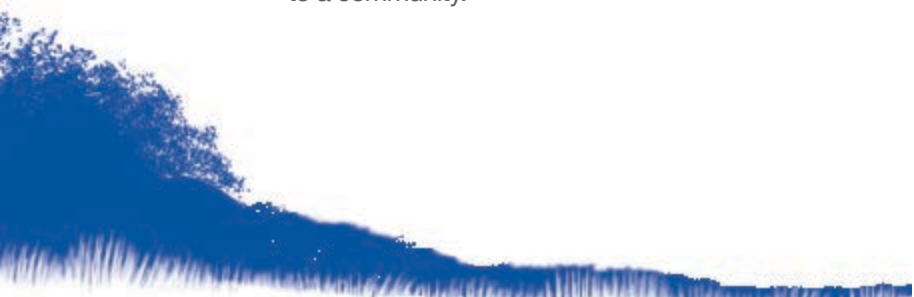
Scott Rose

Jeff Walberg

Kirk Wischmeyer



- Highways 30 and 1 Roundabout:
Accommodate pedestrian traffic at this major intersection; incorporate inconspicuous signage for pedestrian traffic to direct people through the roundabout; incorporate organized planting scheme with year-round interest to signify this intersection as an entrance to a community.





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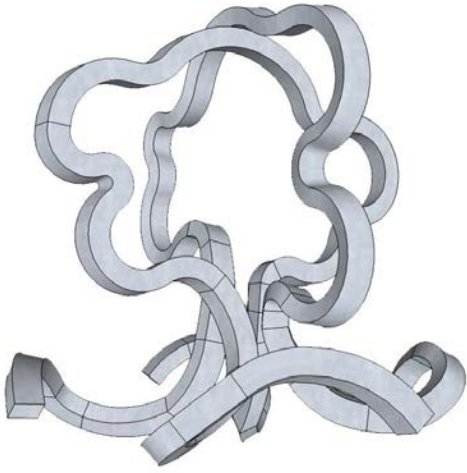
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1. A roundabout is already planned for the intersection of Highways 30 and 1. Careful streetscape and landscape choices will help keep pedestrians safe and make this intersection an attractive gateway to Mount Vernon.
2. The proposed informational kiosk design would incorporate some of the same architectural details as the proposed downtown amenities.
3. The Old Lincoln Highway runs along the one-acre Prairie Park.
4. Native plantings, a new sidewalk and an informational kiosk would convert Prairie Park into an attractive trailhead.
5. The logos proposed by the design team would be appropriate on anything from signs to letterhead.
6. A centerpiece sculpture for the roundabout would be an opportunity to enhance the town's visual identity.
7. Fourth Street would be a good location for a pedestrian crossing of Highway 1.
8. This plan shows possible solutions to correct issues with the five-legged intersection of Bryant Road and First Street.

Prairie City

Trees Forever Facilitator: Brad Riphagen

Landscape Architect: Josh Shields

Interns: Younjae Ahn, Danny Pritchard, Steven Seefeld

Prairie City is a town of about 1,680 people located in Jasper county, Iowa. The community was originally named “Elliot” after its founder, James Elliot. However, Iowa already had a town called Elliot, so the name was changed early on. Today, Prairie City is home to the Prairie City Historical Museum and the Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge. Each of these attractions brings in a modest amount of tourists from neighboring communities.

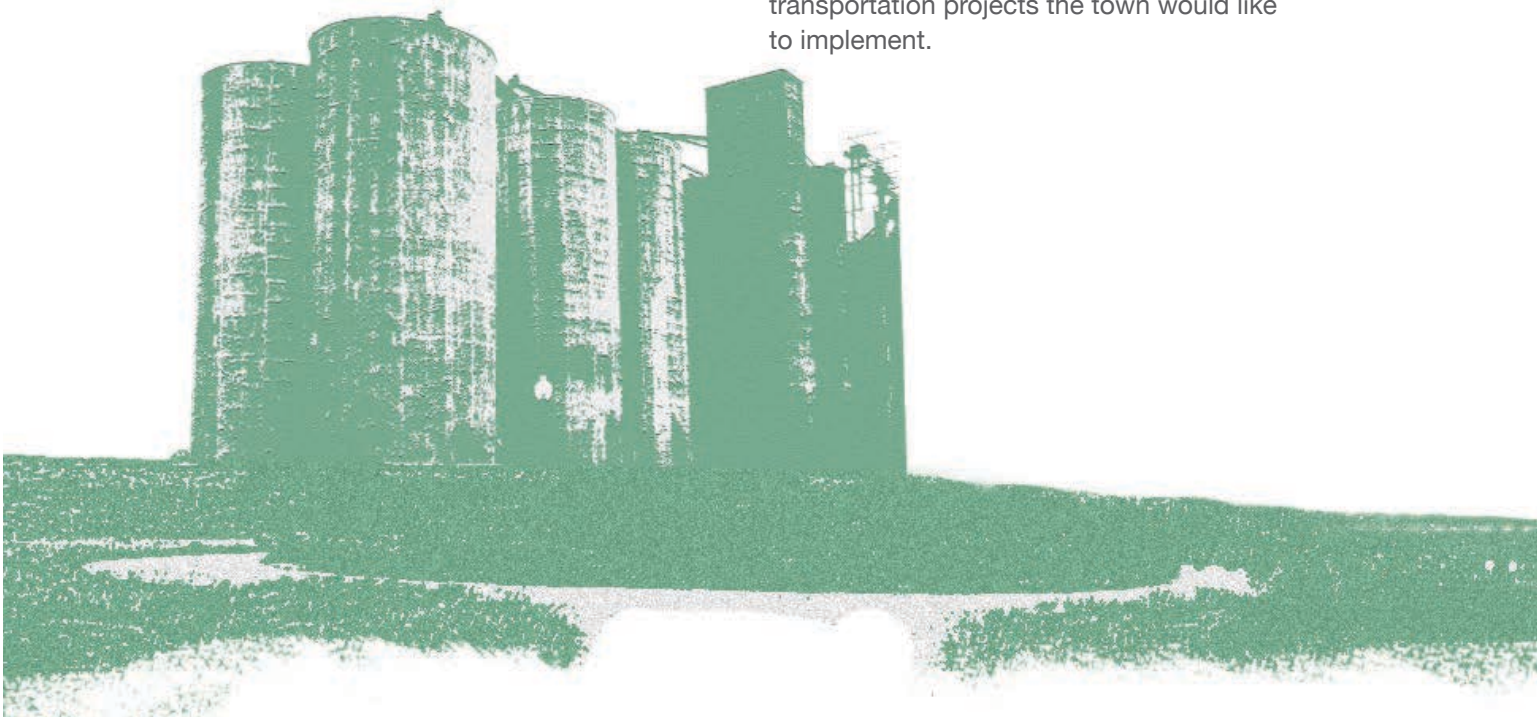
The historical museum houses parts of a Dowden Potato Digger. Prairie City was both the mechanism’s original creation site and manufacturing location. The first railroad came through the community in 1866. These railroad lines are still in operation today, though trains only serve the co-op located near the town square on a limited basis.

Prairie City is currently best know for its location near the Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge. With land acquired by the Fish and Wildlife Service in 1990, the

refuge has herds of 75 bison and 25 elk. Also within its land holdings are remnants of degraded native prairie, which the refuge is hoping to augment through prairie restoration efforts across much of the wildlife refuge.

Motorists driving along Highway 163 will note a large metal bison sculpture in the new development on the west edge of town. This sculpture is the result of Prairie City’s participation in the Community Visioning Program more than a decade ago, in 1998–99. It provides way-finding for the wildlife refuge and serves as a trailhead for the Plainsman Trail in town.

In 2010, the Iowa League of Cities named Prairie City an All Star Community for their Bring People and Prairie Together project. Although the project has improved many aspects of the community, residents acknowledge that to continue to the bond between prairie and people they must keep working in Prairie City. They have discussed a number of community landscaping and transportation projects the town would like to implement.



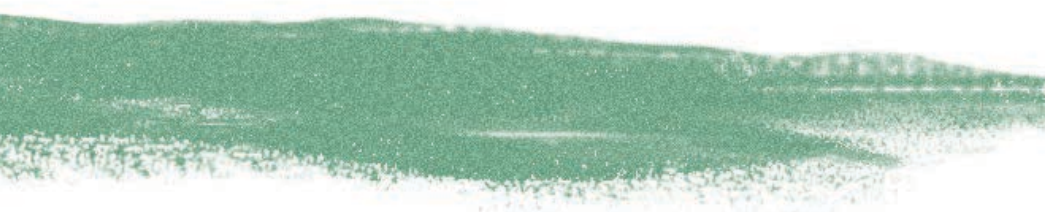


Steering Committee:

*Gladys Burns
Mathew Fuhrur
Cheryl Groom
Evie Johnson
Patricia Hager
Richard Hager
Craig Hamilton
Max Keuning
Sue Ponder
Christy Smith
Joan Van Gorp
Marcy Wilkerson*

After evaluating the goals and prospective projects of Prairie City community members, the design team established a number of proposals including:

- Community Trails Master Plan: Develop a system of trails providing accessible and safe routes through the community while implementing a hierarchy of trails; reinforce existing pedestrian and cycling routes through proposed trails.
- Second Street Corridor Improvements: Develop trail on south side of corridor; establish way-finding for key intersections; enhance corridor with traffic calming devices; establish landscaping.
- Second Street Infrastructure Improvements: Develop storm sewer system to connect existing infrastructure near Casey's, Main Street and State Street; create rain garden area with surface drains and appropriate landscape plantings to filter runoff prior to discharge into storm system while enhancing roadway; develop system of continuing storm water improvements throughout community.
- North Community Entrance Development: Establish a community entrance on the north side of town; explore the use of low maintenance landscaping; provide consistent branding for community by making entrance similar to that on the west side of community.





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1. *A storm sewer system through the Second Street corridor could be used to collect runoff from throughout Prairie City. Appropriate landscaping along Second Street would help filter the water while improving the look of the street.*
2. *The community trails master plan includes improving sidewalks and incorporating them into the trail system.*
3. *The intersection of West Second and Main Streets is a major crossing area for pedestrians to access Garden Square, but lacks any safety measures.*
4. *Proposed safety and beautification strategies include complete sidewalks, marked crosswalks, street trees and plantings.*
5. *The intersection of Norris and West Second Streets is an access point to the recreational complex south of Second Street. Pavers on three sides of that intersection, painted crosswalks and low-maintenance landscaping would help slow traffic entering the commercial corridor.*
6. *This image provides a street-level view of intersection improvements.*

Rockwell City

Trees Forever Facilitator: Meredith Borchardt

Landscape Architect: Seana Godbold

Intern: Devon Clark

The heart of Rockwell City is its city square, which highlights the Calhoun County Courthouse as well as several thriving businesses. Many events take place on the square, including a farmers market for 18 weeks in the summer, Sweet Corn Daze during August and Fall Fest/Chili Cook-Off during Homecoming week, to name a few. The square is located three blocks south of US Highway 20. A newly installed electronic message board in the city park directs travelers to the city square from the highway.

The streets, sidewalks and landscaping from the city park to the city square are lacking in function and visual appeal. An important point of interest along the route to the city square is the train depot, a historical landmark with a very active committee of volunteers. The Train Depot Preservation Committee host several events throughout the year, including a car show and its annual Hobo Stew.

Another important transportation district in Rockwell City is the US 20 corridor. There are many businesses along this route as well as the city park and access to the Calhoun County Fairgrounds and the Calhoun County Historical Museum. There is much work to be done along this route, including a network

of sidewalks through town to connect businesses, the city park, fairgrounds and museum. Decorative lighting along this route would be another welcomed improvement. The entrance to the city park is already attractive with light that would tie into the new lighting along US 20.

The residents and committee members also recognized the importance of safe routes to both community schools. With the elementary and high schools being on opposite sides of the community, they would like additional sidewalks with sidewalks markings, connecting both schools to the city square. Some of recommendations the design team made for Rockwell City include:

- **Courthouse Square Enhancements:** Install sidewalks around the entire square; develop a pocket park, "Garden on 4th."
- **Safe Routes Trail:** Establish safe routes to school and other key locations in Rockwell City; widen sidewalks to 8 to 10 feet; provide adequate lighting, bike racks and benches.
- **Signage and Way-finding Improvements:** Update signage to establish community identity.





Steering Committee:

Sue Carlson

Alyson Dietrich

Gary Dudley

Deb Foster

Phil Heinlen

John Hepp

Joni Hepp

Martin Hildreth

Peggy Hildreth

Gary Nicholson

LeighAnne Oswald

Mary Richardon

John Schmit

Kelly Smidt

Joan Wagner

- **Rainbow Bridge Enhancements:**
Establish a trailhead with a recreational trail providing a rest stop overlooking Lake Creek; enhance the existing gravel driveway with crushed limestone and the addition of head-in parking.





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1. Recommended enhancements to the northeast corner of the town square include a circle of pavement intertwined with plantings to create a peaceful sitting area. This pattern would be repeated at the northwest and southeast corners.
2. The middle school is located at the west end of the safe school route, which radiates from the courthouse square to each grade school and north the the city park/pool area.
3. A major change for Rockwell City is the recent rerouting of Iowa Highway 20 to the north, with access to Rockwell City along Highway 4.
4. Corridor improvements proposed include lighting and general signage.
4. A capstone sign for Rockwell City, "the golden buckle of the cornbelt," was developed to be placed on the directional signage within the community.
5. The capstone is easily identifiable on way-finding signage.
6. The Rainbow Marsh Bridge is one of the few remaining bridges built by James Barney Marsh.
7. The Rainbow Marsh Bridge design has a circular paved area, similar to the paving at the courthouse square, with an informational kiosk.

Sidney

*Trees Forever Facilitator: Brad Riphagen
Landscape Architects: David Stokes, Eric Becker
Interns: Chris Riggert, Eric Doll*

For nearly 90 years, Sidney has been known as “Rodeo Town USA.” It is located at the intersection of US 275 and Highway 2. Sidney, the county seat for Fremont County in southwest Iowa, was established in 1851 and has grown to a population of 1,154. However, residents trace their history back far before settlement. The area is also home to native American burial grounds and residents recall collecting “buckets of arrowheads” during their childhoods.

The Sidney Iowa Championship Rodeo draws 20,000 people into town every August. The community is two miles from the Fremont County Golf Course, 12 miles from the Lewis and Clark Trail, and nine miles from Waubonsie State Park. Sidney is also less than 15 minutes away from one of the most frequented Iowa Visitor Centers near I-29.

Sidney is celebrating its rodeo history by constructing a new rodeo museum on the east side of the square. The museum will be located in what residents referred to as the Historical Complex (4), which includes a schoolhouse and an old church called the Gathering Place. The Gathering Place was established by the Fremont County Historical Society and hosts plays, community activities, musicals, meetings, quilt shows, and so on.

A considerable number of Sidney’s special places are natural areas, which are plentiful because of its location in the Loess Hills. In fact, Sidney residents consider the Loess Hills in general as a special place. They enjoy the beauty, the wildlife, and the unique landscape.

The Sidney visioning committee’s application identified the following goals: creating a concept design plan for the Sidney Outdoor Classroom, tying together the Safe Routes to School Program pathway with the outdoor classroom, improving the aesthetic appeal of the community through design and landscape assistance, creating a concept plan for a new community park south of Sidney near the County Gold Course, and enhancing the appeal of community entryways and signage with landscaping.

Based on the community’s input, the design team’s proposals focused on the following priorities:

- Outdoor classroom: Provide educational opportunities to interact with different plant communities and learn about resource conservation.
- Safe Routes to School: Promote pedestrian infrastructure to connect residential properties to Sidney High School.





Steering Committee:

- Lindsey Barney*
- Kevin Brannen*
- Anne Chambers*
- Emma Chapman*
- Gregg Cruickshank*
- Linda Cruickshank*
- Gaven Driskell*
- Sue Dyke*
- Tammy Grebert*
- Patsy Hume Cara*
- Twila Larson*
- Terry Lewis*
- Jessica Lowthorp*
- Marker Morgan*
- Nancy Newlon*
- Andrea Rexroth*
- Zac Ripperger*
- Rhonda Sheldon*
- Darian Slater*
- Jacob Smith*
- John Spencer*
- Mark Travis*
- Emily Whitehead*

- **Pocket Park:** Utilize the vacant spot adjacent to post office as one of the following concepts: a community garden with raised planters, cold storage and tool storage.; a space that draws on the vocabulary of a forested area, such as nearby Riverton Wildlife Refuge and Waubonsie State Park; or a space with a large picnic and restroom structure.
- **Street Enhancements:** Improve aesthetics of Fillmore and Illinois Streets and Old Highway 275 with trees, lights, banners and signage.

1. The family of signage is inspired by the future Loess Hills Scenic Byway scheme.
2. The Sidney visioning committee identified the vacant lot adjacent to the post office as unsightly.
3. The design team developed three concepts to convert the vacant lot to a parking lot. Concept 1, shown here, is a community garden.





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4. *This section of Filmore Street shows wider, paved walkways, an improved roadway with a curb and gutter system, and rain gardens that double as additional space to push snow during the winter. Overhead street lighting with banners provide a sense of arrival to Sidney.*
5. *The design of the outdoor classroom dynamic and holistic approach to mitigating storm water.*
6. *A route to school along Park Street near the Rodeo was proposed as part of a safe routes to school concept.*



Mark Masteller: Fifteen Years of Service and Leadership



Telling the Stories of Iowa

Travelers on Iowa's highways and interstates are learning about the state's history and culture, whether they realize it or not.

For instance, native prairie along the roadsides harkens back to the days when Iowa was once all prairie. The various rest areas along Iowa's interstates showcase the state's history, culture, and natural environment, from the Underground Railroad to Henry Wallace to the Loess Hills. In Montrose, the restored riverfront offers travelers on the Great River Road a glimpse of life on the Mississippi River. The signage in West Okoboji celebrates Iowa's Great Lakes and identifies it as a recreation area. And so on.

The common denominator in all of these examples is Mark Masteller, chief landscape architect at the Iowa Department of Transportation.

Mark has developed countless roadside planting designs over the years, including prairie, wetlands and woodlands. He also oversaw the design of state's new interstate rest area buildings. He has also been an advisor to the Iowa's Living Roadways (ILR) Community Visioning Program and Projects Program, which have facilitated transportation enhancements in hundreds of Iowa's rural communities, including Montrose and West Okoboji.



Dean Mark Engelbrecht presented Mark with the Design Achievement Award in 2004.



This rest area on I-35 in Story City showcases Iowa's innovative contributions to the design and construction of our roadways.

Mark enjoys the variety of projects in which he is involved. "On any given day I might be working on a design for a community streetscape, a bat mitigation site, a wetland or woodland design or an interstate rest area," he said.

According to Mark, bat mitigation involves planting "trees (forestation style) that will ultimately have loose bark, thus creating habitat for bats. This is done to replace existing habitat that is being disturbed by a highway project. The Indiana Bat is the threatened species of concern for these types of projects."

Mark grew up on his parents' farm in Atlantic. He was interested in studying landscape architecture because it offered opportunities to use his technical drawing skills while working outdoors. He graduated from Iowa State University with a bachelor's degree in landscape architecture in 1978. Shortly thereafter, he took a job at the Iowa DOT in Ames, and worked in mapping and graphics, preliminary design and final design before becoming chief landscape architect in 1989.

In 1996, he collaborated with Julia Badenhope, ILR Community Visioning Program director, to create Iowa's Living Roadways. Mark describes his role this way: "I met with Julia when she first started working at Iowa State. We talked about

Through Roadside Design



Pioneer agriculturalist Henry Wallace is the inspiration for the design of the rest area along I-80 near Adair.

the needs of rural Iowa and the state of the landscape architectural practice in the state. She basically took that information and came up with the visioning idea.”

He continues to be an advisor for the program and is often involved in training for program staff, landscape architects and design interns. “My role has basically been to help make it work within the realm of the DOT and the transportation industry,” he said.

Although he works mostly on the administrative side of projects rather than actual design work, the impact of his achievements are visible all over the state. He takes pride in the programs with which he is involved that result in great projects statewide.

“The Community Visioning Program would rank pretty high on that list. I also really enjoy working on the interstate rest areas. I especially enjoy incorporating artwork into the design to tell a story to travelers about the area through which they are traveling,” Mark said.

In 2004, Mark was awarded the Design Achievement Award by the ISU College of Design for the contributions he has made throughout his career to Iowa. This annual award recognizes outstanding mid-career creative and professional achievements of COD alumni.



This roadside development project demonstrates the utility of native vegetation as a living snow fence, which prevents major snow drifting on the roadway.



Native prairie plants along the Highway 20 roadside create a beautiful view while providing a glimpse of Iowa’s past natural environment.

Mark’s career at the DOT has made him uniquely knowledgeable about Iowa’s roadways. However, his travels throughout the state have made him an expert in more ways than one. He knows all the good local places to grab lunch or a cup of coffee when on the road, such as the restaurant in Dows that has a taco special on Tuesdays.

Mark is married and has two sons in college. He stays active by playing golf, volleyball and tennis. “Playing games helps keep me young at heart,” he said.



People



Interns



Youngjae Ahn

Youngjae is a fourth-year landscape architecture student at Iowa State University. She grew up in South Korea on her family farm near the west coastline where she spent her time exploring oceans, mountains and rivers. She was majoring in environment design at Sookmyung Women's University in South Korea for two years, but she decided to come to the United States to major in landscape architecture and help improve people's lives. She is interested in working with impoverished countries and saving lives. She believes that helping small communities in the world should be the ultimate goal of landscape architecture. Youngjae worked with the communities of Elk Horn, Kimballton and Prairie City in summer 2011.



Ryan Anderson

Born in Cedar Rapids, Ryan has an appreciation for Iowa's culture and enjoyed deepening his understanding of the state through the Community Visioning Program. He was excited about gaining insight into the professional world of landscape architecture and applying his experience to his work as a third-year landscape architecture student. Ryan grew up playing soccer and spending summer weekends at a cabin near the Twin Lakes in central Iowa and loves the outdoors, especially when it involves waterskiing. He enjoys interacting with people, solving problems, and having the chance to reverse damage done to the environment. These interests were all of which resulted in him declaring a secondary major in environmental studies. Ryan worked with the communities of Brighton and Monticello.



Michael Buh

Michael is a third-year student in Iowa State University's landscape architecture program. He was born in Rocksprings, Wyoming, but has spent most of his life in Iowa. His love for the outdoors was acquired during time spent in the Boy Scouts. This is also where he learned to, "always leave a place better than you found it," an idea that opened his eyes to the possibilities of design. Michael was excited to be a part of the Community Visioning Program, because it gave him a chance to provide a positive service while working with people on a personal level. He found the experience to be rewarding and educational. Michael spent the summer working with the communities of Brighton and Monticello.

Samuel Carlson

Samuel grew up in White Bear Lake, Minnesota, and spent most of his time either playing or working at a golf course, and he developed a passion for plants, animals and the outdoor experience. His interests in outdoor environments and design are what led him to Iowa State University's College of Design. He is a fourth-year student in the landscape architecture program. Samuel's experience with Community Visioning was rewarding and he was excited to apply his skills and knowledge to the internship. The town of McGregor, Iowa, caught Samuel's attention because of its rich history, as well as the unique landscape features found in northeast Iowa.



Devon Clark

Devon grew up in Fergus Falls, Minnesota. Though she spent most of her time playing hockey and softball, she liked spending her free time designing projects around her home. When her time wasn't spent with sports, she enjoyed exploring outside. If she wasn't camping or exploring, she was fishing, or hunting with family. So when she enrolled at Iowa State University she knew she had found the perfect major in landscape architecture. The idea of creating spaces that people will enjoy drives Devon's love for design. She enjoyed interacting and working with Rockwell City and Madrid designing enhancements to the quality of these communities.



Eric Doll

Born and raised in Des Moines, Eric came to Iowa State University to develop his drawing skills. He majored in landscape architecture because he loves the outdoors and everything plants offer. Eric is well equipped with knowledge about plants and desires to learn more, so he recently added horticulture as a second major. Eric loves to sketch and watercolor, especially outdoor scenery, and he recently picked up marker rendering. He enjoys spending his time outdoors, playing disc golf, mountain biking, climbing trees, unicycling, juggling, and going on plant walks. Eric worked the community of Sidney.





Nick Gulick

Nick is a third-year landscape architecture student at Iowa State University. Growing up on acreage outside Marion, Iowa, Nick had the opportunity to spend his summers working outdoors, gardening, and maintaining tractors. His appreciation for the environment and urban design was strengthened during the Savanna Studio in the landscape architecture program. This traveling studio gave him a new perspective through which to view the landscape. Nick is eager to continue studying planting design and sustainability, and is also fascinated by the way people and their cultures influence and are influenced by the landscape. Through analysis and community meetings Nick learned of the challenges facing Mount Vernon and Lisbon. He challenged himself to discover those unique qualities in the communities that would strengthen their visioning efforts.



Robin Hamadani

Robin grew up in Independence Iowa, a small town similar to the communities participating in the Community Visioning Program. She has a two-year degree in architecture and construction technology, and ten years' experience in client services, troubleshooting and consumer guidance. In 2011 she graduated with a degree in landscape architecture and earned a secondary major in environmental studies. Robin chose Iowa State University to pursue her interest in environmental design. In 2010 she interned at Cedar Rock, a Frank Lloyd Wright design in Quasqueton, Iowa. There she learned about preservation of historical documents, landscape and antiquities. Robin enjoyed assisting Lisbon and Mount Vernon in developing a vision that encompasses the heart of the community and their values.



Sifei Liu

Sifei is an international student from China in her third year in Iowa State University's landscape architecture program. In summer 2011, she interned with the Community Visioning Program and worked with the community of Monroe. Having grown up in a crowded city in China, she understands the importance of improving the community environment. Through her participation as part of the 2011 Community Visioning design team, her view of community design has been broadened. She was excited to learn more about the design process and help the community members explore a better living environment.

Danny Pritchard

Danny is a third-year student at Iowa State University in landscape architecture. His admiration of this field sprouted from an early interest in art, nature and a desire to understand more thoroughly how people live in their environment. In his spare time, Danny enjoys drawing and painting in various media, gardening, camping, biking, reading sci-fi, drinking tea, gaming, working on his computer, browsing the Internet, and daydreaming. Over the course of the Visioning Program, he has gained invaluable knowledge of and skill in the Adobe Suite and the graphic layouts of his projects have improved greatly. Learning to gather input and feedback from community members and using it to influence design is one of the key abilities he has gained from this experience. Danny hopes to apply all these new found abilities to his future projects.



Nate Schlorholtz

Nate Schlorholtz is third-year landscape architecture student at Iowa State University. An Iowa native, he has enjoyed helping improve the lives of people in Madrid and Monroe. Nate enjoys staying physically active by playing sports and being outdoors. He is very interested in urban, community and sustainable design. Nate became involved with the Community Visioning Program because it provided him with the opportunity to interact with people and gain hands-on experience in the field of landscape architecture. He hopes he can work at a personal level with communities again in the future.



Steven Seefeld

Steve is a fourth-year landscape architecture student at Iowa State University. He enjoys being active outdoors, playing sports such as racquetball, and gardening. His love for the outdoors and plants propelled Steven into the major of landscape architecture after a short venture into the College of Business. Although Steven is currently in the landscape architecture program he plans on obtaining a business management degree as well. Steven enjoyed being able to interact with community members on a personal level, helping them to beautify and improve aspects of their community. He worked with the communities of Elk Horn, Kimballton and Prairie City. In the future Steven will participate in a National Student Exchange at the University of Hawaii–Hilo during spring 2012. He hopes to obtain an internship working at a landscape firm on one of the islands.



Intern Coordinators



Lily-Love Toppar

Lily is a recent graduate of Iowa State University's landscape architecture program. Before attending ISU, she attended the Achimota Secondary School and Allias Francais, earning a certificate in spoken languages. Lily's hometown is Accra, the capital city of Ghana. Her interest has always been in community relations and design, especially for those affected by natural disasters. As an intern herself in 2009 and 2010, Lily worked with the communities of Parkersburg, New Hartford and Story City for the Visioning Program, then this summer assumed the role of intern coordinator. She is studying architecture and planning Cornell University in Ithaca, New York.



Kelly Fuglsang

A recent graduate of Iowa State University's bachelor of landscape architecture Program cum laude, Kelly's interests in contemporary art and design, typography and architecture influence much of his work. In the spring 2010 he participated in an International Student Exchange in Stockholm, Sweden, and interrailed across Western Europe. His experiences abroad and at ISU were put to use this summer, working as a design consultant and intern manager for the Visioning Program. He has returned to Europe, to live in Berlin and work as an intern landscape architect at Atelier Loidl.

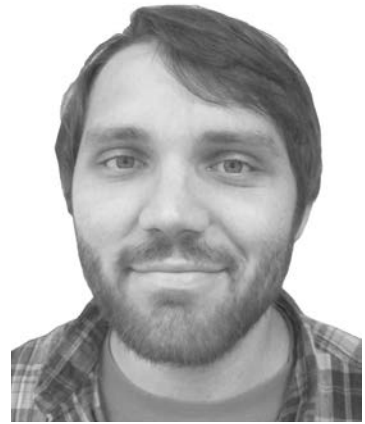
Alex Priest

Alex Priest graduated cum laude with a bachelor's degree in landscape architecture and minor in design studies in May 2011. Alex has also studied abroad at the Universiteit van Amsterdam and received the Barbara King Scholarship for Innovation. While in Europe, he explored the potential fusion between fashion and landscape architecture. Alex harnesses the contemporary potential of art and design to synthesize personal narratives and the contextual collages of his life into evocative artwork that challenges current distinctions between art and design. As an intern manager and design consultant, Alex enjoyed developing and enhancing a commitment to graphic standards of the Community Visioning Program. Alex is an administrative assistant at the Bemis Center for Contemporary Art in Omaha.



Chris Riggert

Chris is a fourth-year student at Iowa State University in the landscape architecture program. He is from Louisville, Kentucky, and came to ISU to study community and regional planning at the College of Design. He switched to landscape architecture after becoming interested in designing places and experiences, specifically in urban settings and communities within them. His interest lies in working to stimulate positive change in communities through transportation and sustainable practices. This summer Chris served as an intern manager and enjoyed the hands-on instruction of the Adobe Suite. He also worked with Jeffrey L. Bruce and the community of Sidney. Next spring he intends to obtain an internship in New York City or study abroad at KTH Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm.



Practitioners



Samantha Abkes

Samantha Abkes graduated from Iowa State University with a degree in landscape architecture in 2009. She has been involved in various aspects of the Community Visioning Program since graduation. Her favorite part of the Visioning Program is having the opportunity to meet such wonderful people and learning about different communities in Iowa. Sam worked with Craig Ritland in the community of McGregor, and also assisted with survey data collection.



Eric Becker

Eric has been actively developing and assisting with projects from schematic design and planning through construction documents and construction administration phases for just over four years at Jeffrey L. Bruce & Company. With Eric's educational experience, he has used his knowledge of 3-D graphics to illustrate designs for clients and consultants. His national and international travel has given him knowledge of designing for diversity in climate, culture and site specific characteristics involved in projects. Since joining JLB in June 2007, Eric has worked extensively in conceptual design and planning, irrigation and soils design, construction documentation, and construction administration of various community and landscape related projects.



Andrea Blaha

Andrea has been an employee of Hall and Hall Engineers in Hiawatha just over a year, but has worked with Loren Hoffman as a mentor to the Visioning Program for the past two summers. Andrea earned a bachelor of landscape architecture from Iowa State University in 2009 and served as a visioning intern that summer. Her project experience includes master planning, streetscape design and creating marketing pieces for a variety of clients. Andrea continues to explore ways to expand her education in her profession as well as educate and empower all those around her. She plans to receive a certificate in graphic design and become an accredited LEED Green Associate this fall. Andrea stays active in her community by volunteering her efforts at various non-profit organizations.

Al Bohling

Al earned bachelor's and master's degrees in landscape architecture from Iowa State University in 1967 and 1969, respectively. He is the community development team leader for Shive-Hattery in Cedar Rapids. Al has been a member of the Iowa Board of Landscape Architectural Examiners, a writer of the national Landscape Architectural Registration Exam (LARE) and a member of the Task Analysis Subject Matter Experts Committee for the Council of Landscape Architectural Registration Board. He has served on the Louisa County Conservation Board and is cofounder and past president of the Tri-Rivers Conservation Foundation. Al and his staff have participated in visioning for 14 years.



Brett Douglas

Brett is the founding principal of Genus Landscape Architects. His collaborations with renowned architects, landscape architects, designers and artists provide Genus with seasoned experience and a unique approach to each design challenge. Brett brings more than 13 years of experience with a variety of project scales from citywide park planning, streetscape design and campus master plans to lake shore restoration and green roof installations. A recent president of the Iowa Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects, Brett remains active in the community as a member of the Friends of the Botanical Center Board, Terrace Hill Site Committee and the Heritage Carousel Board.



Seana Godbold

Prior to starting her own business, Seana worked at Engineering Plus, Snyder & Associates, and Beck Engineering. Much of her time was invested in streetscape design, site planning and low-impact development. While at Engineering Plus, Seana participated in the Le Grand, Sheldon, and Belmond visioning projects. In recent years she has taken up part-time project management work with the Emmet County Soil and Water Conservation District to improve the Tuttle Lake Watershed. She developed a master plan for the two-year project that earned the district a generous grant. Seana's recent projects as a sole proprietor include the St. Mary's Catholic Church courtyard and prayer garden in Spirit Lake, the Humpty Dumpty Park in Rockwell City, planting designs for the Estherville entryway signs, and multiple residential projects. She was the consultant for the Visioning Program in Lake View, Lake Park, Laurens and Rockwell City.





Loren Hoffman

Loren is a project manager at Hall & Hall Engineers, Inc. and has more than 15 years experience in planning and design projects for public and private clients. He specializes in complex site and streetscape projects requiring expertise in project management for multi-disciplinary teams, multiple clients, and extensive cultural, historical, public art, and public participation components. Loren collaborates with design professionals, artists, government agencies, and non-profit neighborhood groups to design successful public spaces that reflect the diversity and cultural richness of their surroundings. He has a broad scope of site design, streetscape, and urban design projects across eastern Iowa. Loren is a LEED Accredited Professional in Neighborhood Design.



Dylan Jones

Dylan earned a bachelor of landscape architecture from Iowa State University in May 2010. He first served as an intern for Community Visioning in 2007 and continued to be involved with the program in 2008 and 2010. In 2009, Dylan spent eight months working at Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates in Brooklyn, New York, where he honed his skill in model making and graphic representation. At the beginning of the year he moved to Des Moines to begin his professional career in landscape architecture at Genus Landscape Architects, where he continues to be involved with Community Visioning. At Genus, he has also been involved with projects of various scales, from contextual urban planning to detailed site design.



Darla Petersen

Darla is a 1987 graduate of Mount Mercy College with a bachelor of science in business administration. She manages the projects of the Shive-Hattery community development team in Cedar Rapids, which is composed of land surveyors, landscape architects, and civil and transportation engineers. The community development team offers unusually good solutions for roadway and site development for private and public clients from several market sectors, including education, government, health care, retail commercial and industry. In addition to managing the processes associated with the delivery of services, Darla offers a unique perspective for programming and critical design review. She has worked with the Visioning Program since coming the team in December 2000.

Craig Ritland

Craig earned his degree in landscape architecture from Iowa State University in 1965 and established Craig Ritland Landscape Architects in 1970 in Waterloo. He is best known for his accomplishments in natural resource and cultural preservation of public lands. Craig was named a Fellow by the American Society of Landscape Architects in 2002. Some of his projects have included the restoration of cold-water streams, the Cedar Valley Lakes and Nature Trail projects, a master plan for George Wyth State Park, and downtown Waterloo River Loop projects. Craig has participated in the Community Visioning Program every year since 1996 and enjoys relating to the rural public and native Iowa landscapes of the communities he serves.



Josh Shields

Josh first became involved with Community Visioning in 1999 when he was an intern for three communities. He worked for the Visioning Program until his graduation from Iowa State University with a bachelor of landscape architecture in 2002. After graduation, Josh moved to Philadelphia to pursue an internship with the Cultural Landscapes Program of the National Park Service. He returned in 2003 to work for HR Green Company, where he renewed his collaboration with visioning in the role of a consultant landscape architect. This year Josh worked in the communities of Elk Horn, Kimballton and Prairie City. In August, he joined Bolton and Menk, Inc., where he hopes to continue collaborating with the Visioning Program.





David Stokes

David is a project landscape architect with 12 years of professional experience providing clients with urban design, landscape design, comprehensive master planning, integrated green infrastructure, parks, trails, and greenways planning/design and resource-based planning on projects of all sizes throughout the country. David also has professional experience in facilitating public input and stakeholder meetings, cultural/environmental assessments, biological assessment studies and other various GIS related analysis planning projects. Since joining Jeffrey L. Bruce & Company, David has worked extensively with clients on green roof and green infrastructure design, agronomic soils design, subdrainage and storm water management design, water resource management, construction documentation and construction administration for public and private sector clients.



Grant Thompson

Grant joined Genus Landscape Architects in 2008 after earning bachelor's degrees in landscape architecture and horticulture. He has previous experience working with Community Visioning in Story City, Iowa. Professionally, Grant has worked on variety of project scales ranging from comprehensive planning for the Loess Hills, to parks and trails plans for communities in central Iowa. He has a continued interest in historic preservation and interpretation through digital media, resulting in the creation of audio tours for cultural amenities and attractions across Iowa.

Trees Forever

Shannon Ramsay

Shannon cofounded Trees Forever in 1989 as a volunteer; today she has more than 20 years of wonderful Trees Forever history. Whether working with staff, board, partners or volunteers, Shannon strives to create a structure that supports and sustains those involved. Currently the National Chair for the Alliance for Community Trees, Shannon has served on numerous national and local boards. Shannon's undergraduate education is in creative writing and philosophy from the University of Mississippi, with graduate level work completed on management, fund-raising and nonprofit management. Shannon enjoys the outdoors, whether hiking, kayaking or gardening. She lives on 45 acres along the Wapsipinicon River in Jones County, Iowa.



Carole Teator

Carole Teator is Trees Forever's program director and also manages the Iowa's Living Roadways Visioning, Projects, and Trails programs for the organization. Her duties including include leading Trees Forever's nine field coordinators who serve as facilitators for the Community Visioning process. Carole has master's degrees in both English and community and regional planning from Iowa State University and has worked for Trees Forever for more than ten years.



Leslie Berckes

Leslie comes to Trees Forever with a diverse background in environmental and conservation issues. She has worked on programs dedicated to reducing solid waste, improving energy efficiency and promoting sustainable building practices. At Trees Forever, Leslie serves as a field coordinator for the central Iowa region working with volunteers and organizations throughout the area. Leslie earned an master of arts in public policy, with an emphasis on environmental policy, and a bachelor of arts in Marketing from the University of Northern Iowa.





Meredith Borchardt

Meredith Borchardt is a field coordinator working with volunteers in northeast Iowa through many different Trees Forever programs, and is a program manager for several community forestry programs. She and her husband and two children live outside of Clarksville. She graduated from Luther College with a double major of biology and religion. She later earned a master of science degree from Iowa State University in botany, doing a research project on the effects of mowing and fertilization on diversity in a new prairie reconstruction.



Karen Brook

As a field coordinator and program manager, Karen works with nearly all of Trees Forever's planting and education programs. She and her husband live in Hiawatha, and much of her work is done with communities in Linn County. Karen has a master of science degree in resource development from Michigan State University and a bachelor of science in natural resources and environmental sciences from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She has previous work experience in education and the environment in Illinois, Guyana, and Jamaica, where she served as a Peace Corps volunteer.



Barb Grabner-Kerns

Barb is program manager for Trees Forever's Working Watersheds: Buffers and Beyond program in Iowa and is field coordinator for northwest Iowa. She has a bachelor's degree in zoology from Iowa State University and has worked as an environmental educator. Barb has also worked extensively with farmers on environmental and policy issues. Her favorite thing about her job is working with grassroots volunteers and seeing them make a difference in their communities and on their farms. "Seeing their enthusiasm and passion about projects is so exciting—and contagious!" She especially enjoys working with farmers, rural landowners and communities that are working to improve water quality by installing buffers and rain gardens.

Mark Pingenot

Mark has a bachelor of arts in biology and is a certified arborist with the International Society of Arboriculture. A dedicated field coordinator and educator, Mark recently led the development and implementation of the Vinton Shellsburg High School model outdoor classroom project. Mark coordinates the Stewards of the Beautiful Land program, and he enjoys supporting volunteers, and working with farmers and landowners. He is also a Community Tree Steward and has been certified in S130/S190 Wildland Firefighting. According to Mark, "I enjoy all aspects of restoration and management of woodlands, wetlands, prairies and savannas, and environmental education." Mark lives with his wife, Carrie, and two children, outside of Vinton, Iowa.



Patty Petersen

Patty has a bachelor of science in horticulture from Iowa State University and has been with Trees Forever since 1991, coordinating tree planting events, training volunteers with tree selection, reviewing site plans and facilitating local efforts. Patty has extensive experience with media, especially TV and radio. Passionate about helping communities achieve their goals, Patty is always excited to travel throughout Iowa to see the results of the great projects supported by Alliant Energy, Black Hills Energy and the Iowa's Living Roadways Community Visioning and Projects programs. Before joining Trees Forever, Patty worked as a horticulturist in eastern Iowa for Iowa State University Extension. She is a certified arborist and a member of the International Society of Arboriculture, the Board of Directors for the Iowa Association for Energy Efficiency, the Iowa Urban and Community Forestry Council, and the Iowa Arborist Association.





Brad Riphagen

Brad has a bachelor of arts in biology and a master of science in land resources with a focus on prairie restoration and soils. He has been a Trees Forever field coordinator since 1995 and worked in almost all the program areas, including community tree plantings, Community Visioning, and buffer/watershed work. In recent years he has been heavily involved in NeighborWoods in Des Moines, working with them to reach a goal of 100,000 trees. He has also taken a strong interest in reduction of storm water runoff, especially in urban areas, through the use of infiltration practices such as rain gardens and bioretention basins. Brad is energized by the interaction with volunteers around the state and especially in southwest Iowa. “The fact that people want to make where they live a better place and that we can provide some assistance in their efforts is very gratifying.”



Emily Swihart

Emily has a strong passion for helping Iowa towns explore sustainable options for improving their homes and communities. As field coordinator and design specialist, Emily combines her knowledge of native and ornamental plant materials with a flair for design to help communities plan, organize, obtain funding and implement landscape enhancement projects. Emily holds a bachelor of science in horticulture from Iowa State University and is earning her master’s degree in landscape architecture from Kansas State University. Emily has the good fortune to have Iowa’s Wild Cat Den State Park as a neighbor. As an avid outdoorswoman, Emily enjoys exploring trails with her running partner (her German shorthair—Charger), biking, and gardening. She is also a passionate lifelong learner who loves to read and travel.

Iowa DOT

Stuart Anderson

Director, Planning, Programming, and Modal Division, Iowa DOT



Steve Holland

Roadside Coordinator, Iowa Living Roadway Trust Fund, Iowa DOT



Mark Mastellar

Chief Landscape Architect, Iowa DOT



Iowa State University



Julia Badenhope

Director, Iowa's Living Roadways Community
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Civil Rights and Small Federal Programs

Lubin Quinones

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Administration



Successful Community Projects and Place Attachment



Successful Community Projects

An important part of the design process in the Community Visioning Program is discovering how lowans feel about the places around them. People articulate the tranquility they associate with particular park trails and the pride that comes from century-old landmarks. Kids talk about the excitement of a stream full of frogs or the togetherness at a popular swimming pool. Residents even relate with nostalgia stories of parking spots that have seen generations of first kisses. Each of these feelings strengthens the emotional link that people have with their physical surroundings. That link, which researchers call “place attachment,” helps people feel socially connected, reinforces personal identity and promotes well-being. Activities associated with place enable exploration, reflection, connection with nature and connection with shared history. Place attachment is what allows small towns to thrive despite economic pressure, and it is why the Community Visioning Program focuses on developing projects that reflect and fulfill residents’ concepts of the places in which they live.

Place Identity

The relationship between a place and its residents is captured in the idea of “place identity,” the values and sensibilities that residents believe characterize a place. Place identity is important to community projects because people who have a strong attachment to a place want its appearance to reflect their values. Highly visible spaces, such as highway rights-of-way and busy streets, are significant in creating a visual identity that matches the place identity.

In community visioning, projects that reinforce and communicate place identity—such as entry signage, entryway beautification, and commercial district or Main Street streetscapes and signage—are created in response to what designers learn about place identity during the community assessment process. Because each community is unique, there is no “one size fits all” design solution.

The differences between visioning communities are evident in the diversity of signs developed through the program. Nestled by the Volga River in northeast Iowa, the town of Volga is surrounded by rocky cliffs, native stands of white pines and hilly farm fields. When drivers on County Road 2CW reach the four-way stop at the edge of Volga, they are greeted by a waterfall gushing over native limestone, complemented by a backdrop of pines and other conifers. The sign represents the image residents have of their town—a settlement in a natural paradise—and communicates that image to motorists. It marks the threshold between the agrarian countryside and the storied territory of the town residents and their river.

In contrast, the sign for Storm Lake, Iowa, reflects a cultural response to the landscape—a lighthouse—that dramatically communicates the idea of big water and stormy weather. The community of Storm Lake is located on a large natural lake popular with summer visitors and year-round residents. The community also hosts many festivals, musical productions and other events that attract people from the surrounding areas. The lighthouse is used here as a beacon to outsiders, creating a highly visible and memorable landmark to help visitors navigate their way into town. Its theatrical contrast with the corn and bean



At special places mapping workshops, participants identify and describe meaningful places in their community, both past and present.

and Place Attachment



Top: Volunteers pose with the new Volga City sign shortly after they completed construction. Bottom: The lighthouse along Highway 71 beckons to travelers to stop in Storm Lake.

fields of the surrounding countryside reflects the character of the residents of Storm Lake, who stage events and create opportunities for fun and exploration in their community.

Community Sentiment

Community sentiment is the attachment community members feel for each other, which can be developed through shared experiences of place. People who live together—growing up, working and playing together in a particular setting—associate their sense of belonging with the places that support their shared experiences. Walking routes, for example, are often valued

“One of my mom and dad’s romantic memories was sitting in that park by the old mill and having a milkshake. After my dad died, my mom took a ride with me; she wanted to go down there and have a milkshake.”

— focus group participant in Independence



The pocket park in Colesburg is a gathering space for residents as well as a place of beauty (2006).

because of community sentiment, whether they are sidewalk loops in town or broader trail systems. The places themselves gain significance because they enable people to connect in socially meaningful ways. Cemeteries are another catalyst of community sentiment; people visit them to walk with friends and to remember relatives and friends

“I remember always going down by the bridge to swim in the river and hang out with friends during my summers as a kid.”

— mapping participant in Rockford

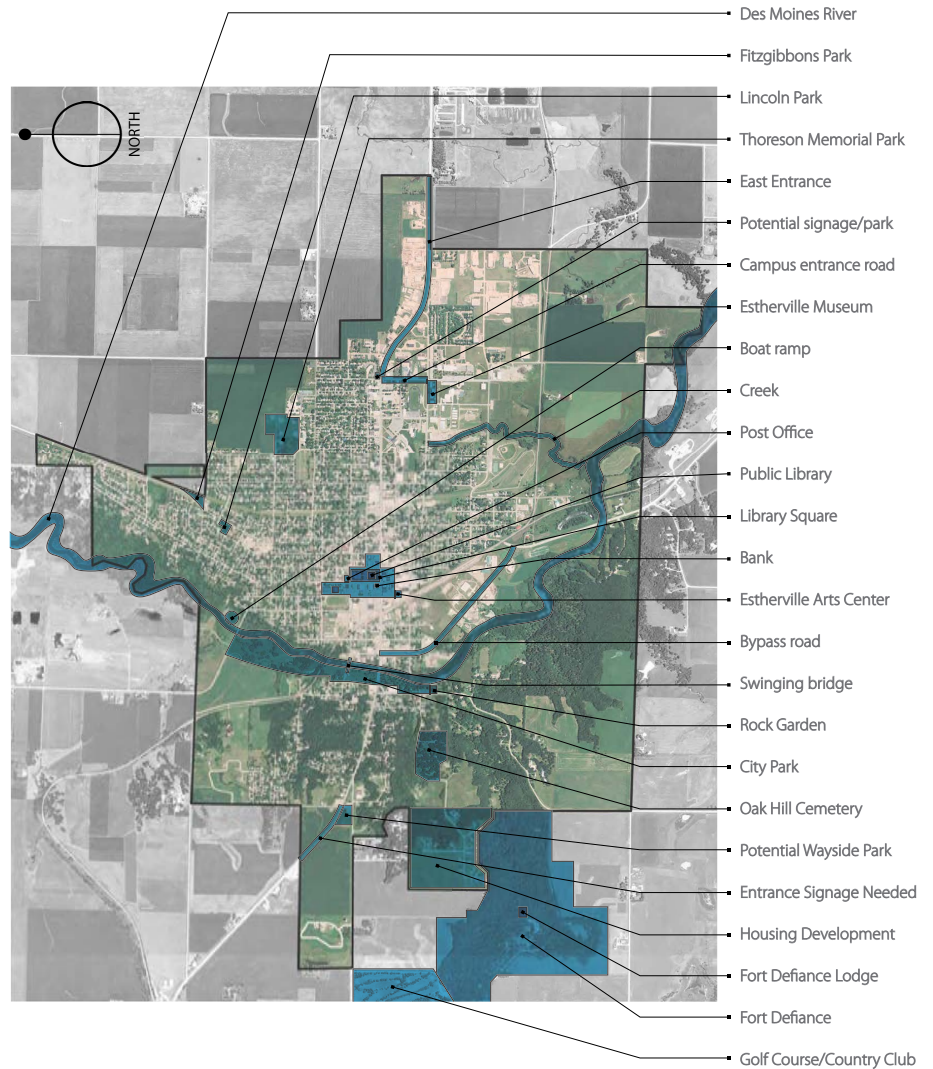
who have passed on. Outdoor recreation areas, such as riverside parks, natural areas, camping and picnic facilities, and special facilities such as fairgrounds, racetracks and campuses, also reflect values associated with social belonging. They are valued because they are where life events happen—family reunions, festivities with friends, and events that attract families and friends from far away.

Spending time together outdoors plays an important role in developing community sentiment. During the participatory mapping sessions held with communities prior to design, many of the places identified as significant were the parks, natural areas and routes people use when spending time. While natural beauty is a part of what makes places special, landscapes are about social memories for many small-town residents. One example of a project that reflects community

sentiment is the pocket park in Colesburg, Iowa. A building had been torn down on Main Street, creating a feeling of deterioration that community members found unacceptable. In place of the vacant lot, residents planned a pocket park with a garden maintained by local garden club members. It provided a place of beauty and the opportunity to share their interest in gardening. The park also has a gazebo that acts as a small gathering place where local residents can eat lunch together and talk while enjoying welcome shade on an otherwise exposed Main Street. Building the pocket park promoted community sentiment by substituting social space and shared activities for emptiness and loss of vitality.

During the special places mapping sessions conducted in 2010, residents identified many natural areas that are integral to community sentiment. For example, residents of Estherville noted that the Des Moines River is an important community space, where husky races were held in the past. In the same community, Thoreson Park was valued as a place to have picnics and walk on the nature trails, but residents lamented the loss of the pond as a place to ice skate in the winter. Skating at the pond was a social activity that earlier generations enjoyed during an otherwise dreary season. For mapping workshop participants, maintaining the park and its winter skating programs is a continuation of traditions that reinforce and reflect community sentiment.

Successful community visioning projects can create community sentiment as well as reflect it. In 1998, Slater planned several trail projects to enhance opportunities for trail use. The American Discovery Trail and Heart of



Top: This map illustrates the locations of special natural and cultural places in Estherville. Bottom: The swinging bridge in Estherville was described as “iconic” by mapping participants.

Iowa Trail both pass through or very near the community, and community leaders saw the trail as an opportunity to provide people with an outlet for exercise and social activity. In communities like Slater, where new residents

are moving into town because they can enjoy the qualities of small-town life without having a long commute, creating opportunities for people to have satisfying social interactions is also important. Trailside parks and gathering areas provide places for residents to socialize while enjoying the trail experience with friends. One can meet friends at the park, have a picnic, and then go for a walk or bike ride. Cultivating community sentiment satisfies new residents' desire for an authentic small-town lifestyle, and it might make a difference in their willingness to stay.

Although place attachment is an important



The American Discovery Trail near Slater is a venue for both physical and social activities.

Place Attachment and Community Visioning

concern for planners everywhere, Iowa's history has made place identity and community sentiment particularly strong among its residents. Between 1980 and 1990, the total population of Iowa declined by nearly five percent, primarily due to the farm crisis in the 1970s and 80s and the subsequent recession. While it is true that there has been a decrease in the number of farms in Iowa, as well as in the average number of people living on farms, Iowa State University sociologist Willis J. Goudy found that the statewide small-town population has remained relatively stable. "In recent decades, small towns have been frequently described as unlikely to enjoy much of a future. Yet as a group, small towns in Iowa have been more stable than commonly suggested..."¹

The enduring nature of Iowa's rural communities may be attributed to the strong place attachment held by residents who stayed, as well as their deep social ties to others in the community. Many residents of small-town Iowa have lived in those towns for their entire lives or have chosen to move back after starting careers elsewhere. In his study of social factors affecting community sentiment in North-central Iowa communities,

Goudy reported that kinship and friendship are very important factors affecting community sentiment. He found that the greater the time spent in the community, the more people develop friendships within the community and nearby. He also found that the length of residence and age are positively related to strength of community sentiment as demonstrated by a greater interest in local affairs and more sadness when forced to think about leaving.²

The importance of place attachment is why the Community Visioning Program does not try to start from one-size-fits-all best practices. Instead, the program leads local residents in assessments that identify places of special value and aesthetic preferences. The findings are presented and used to formulate transportation enhancement goals particular to the client community, in the process bringing out qualities that reflect place identity (as captured in the visual quality survey) and community sentiment (from the special places mapping workshops). Conceptual plans are then developed in public design workshops and ultimately approved by a local steering committee and local government leaders.

¹Willis Goudy. 2008. *Iowa's Numbers: 150 Years of Decennial Census Data With a Glance to the Future*. Ames, Iowa: Department of Sociology, Iowa State University.

²Willis J. Goudy. Community Attachment in a Rural Region. *Rural Sociology* 55(2): 1990, p. 178–198.

Place Attachment and Project Implementation

Promoting community sentiment also plays a role in community visioning project implementation. Ninety-four percent of communities participating in the Community Visioning Program complete at least one project proposed through the process. It takes five years on average for highest-priority visioning projects to be implemented. Implemented projects tend to be strongly related to place identity and shared activities. To evaluate these patterns, Iowa State University researchers used state funding reports and communities' self-reported data to track how much funding communities have raised for their projects.

By examining the numbers and types of projects funded by four project programs, we were able to measure the successes of communities in building projects they proposed in the visioning process. The funding sources looked at in this evaluation were:

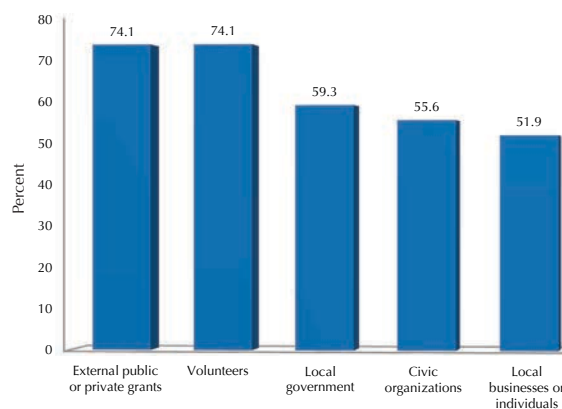
- The Living Roadway Trust Fund, offered through the Iowa Department of Transportation, which funds ecological roadsides
- Iowa's Living Roadways Projects Program, the sister program to visioning, which funds plant materials for roadside plantings
- Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) which funds open space development
- Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) Grants, through the Iowa Department of Economic Development, which fund economic development.

In addition to those four sources, a significant amount of funding comes from volunteers and civic organizations (see figure 1)³. Typically,

³Badenhope, Julia. 2006. *Community Visioning Program Impact Assessment: a focus on social capital, economic influence, and projects completed*. Ames, Iowa: Iowa

a project will be implemented with a mix of funds from several sources; as a result, the percentages shown in figure 1 exceed 100 percent. Some funding sources, including the CAT and ILR Projects programs, also require community contributions or matching funds. That means that the actual amount of funds generated for a project can be significantly higher than the original amount awarded (table 1).⁴ Interestingly, discussions with steering committee members and data from the Iowa's Living Roadways Projects Program show that communities regularly commit more than the required amount of match money to implement projects.

Figure 1. Sources of funding obtained by communities.



Of 290 projects funded by the four programs, 258, or 89 percent, are associated with place attachment. We further broke down those projects into three groups: projects related to place identity, those related to being outdoors, and those that involve a combination of both. The total funds awarded for place attachment projects are shown in Table 2.⁵

Using place attachment as a guiding design principle has been the key to the Community Visioning Program's continued success. By understanding local values and incorporating them into design concepts, visioning program design teams are able to create transportation enhancement plans that are meaningful to

State University Department of Landscape Architecture.

⁴Badenhope, Julia and Sandra Oberbroeckling. 2010. Effects of grassroots transportation enhancement planning on rural places. *Proceedings*. Forty-first Annual Meeting of the Environmental Design Research Association, Washington, DC.

⁵Ibid.

Table 1. Total funds generated, including estimated CAT and ILR Projects matches

Type	Total funds awarded	CAT match (50%)	ILR Projects match (49%)	Total funds generated
Place Identity	\$6,000,823	\$333,614	\$522,145	\$6,856,582
Being Outdoors	\$18,974,799	\$7,697,328	\$99,861	\$26,771,988
Both types	\$1,695,996	\$282,500	\$96,700	\$2,075,196
Total:	\$26,671,618	\$8,313,442	\$718,706	\$35,703,766

Table 2. Project Types in Terms of Place Attachment, 1996–2009

Type	Number completed	Total funds awarded
Place Identity	140	\$6,000,823
Being Outdoors	82	\$18,974,799
Both types	36	\$1,695,996
Total:	258	\$26,671,618

community residents. In a significant number of cases, participating communities take ownership of these plans and make the effort to bring them to fruition.

For Further Reading

Willis J. Goudy. Community Attachment in a Rural Region. *Rural Sociology* 55(2): 1990, p. 178–198.

H.M. Proshanski, et al. Place Identity: Physical World Socialization of Self. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*. (1963) 3: 57-83.

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